

# SCREW ATTACK

## MAGAZINE



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January 2012 - No 12









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- ▶ The Legend of Zelda El Rey comic by <http://comiz-inc.deviantart.com/>

With the art work from:

<a href="http://mikebueur.deviantart.com/">http://mikebueur.deviantart.com/</a>	<a href="http://timoni771.deviantart.com/">http://timoni771.deviantart.com/</a>
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<http://tomp Preston.deviantart.com/>

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Design, direction, construction, editing, production and publishing by  
Gerardo Andres Mejia Torres - g1 Hybrid Rain

Bogotá, Colombia.

Email: [HybridRainRL@gmail.com](mailto:HybridRainRL@gmail.com)

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/HybridRain>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/HybridRain>

Google+: <http://Gplus.to/HybridRain>

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# EDITORIAL

## Small edition of EPIC PROPORTIONS!!!



Well we are back on 2012 with more g1 content and entertainment, but this month is just a small filler issue to what is coming in the following months. Now this might be a shorter version of the magazine but is understandable, January is a hard month to get reviews or even release good games to the public so yeah this month always lacks of content but maybe for February we will have much more

content for you. It has come to my attention that many of you don't read the blogs I post about submissions and rules to submit your articles, well unfortunately I have to give you all a Last and Final Warning:

If you don't submit following the guidelines, me or the group of editors will delete the emails that aren't tag or with the proper subject, PERIOD. It might be harsh but I'm sorry, sometimes it is really hard to organize the emails and content of the magazine if these are all over the place with no proper tagging, it makes me lose precious time which is needed on this publishing so please g1s, if you are going to submit read the guidelines for submitting, ask if you don't know but please do it. If an email is rejected we will inform obviously until you re-send it properly tagged.

Did I mention Editors??? Yes my friends we have editors on the magazine (finally), I have to admit doing this One-Man Army job has cost me a lot of my time and effort and although I know I can do it, I can't just keep the pace and sometimes it just leaves me exhausted so I definitely needed help for this. So the magazine's new editors are:  
g1 Elmo3000 and g1 SideSmash!

Thanks for joining me on this project, really appreciate it. Their job is to select the work for the magazine each month, spellcheck and fix the articles you guys send me; in other words they are going to be the filters for the project. If you would like to help you can send me a PM or email to HybridRainRL@gmail.com and we can work together on this magazine.

Well that's it for now enjoy this edition and hope to see you in 15 days.

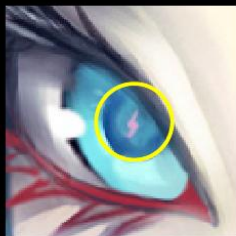
Hybrid Rain  
Gerardo Mejia

## The ScrewAttack Bolt!

Every month in the front page I hide a small ScrewAttack Bolt so you can find it, the lucky one:

g1 JETZ.acx

YOU ARE WINNER!  
Keep Hunting!









# SUMMARIO



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# -VIDEO GAME PRE

## ANARCHY REIGNS

Release Date: January 3rd

Platform: Xbox 360, PS3

Hype Level: 5/10

g1 MadHero15 thinks:

The first game of 2012 is brought to us by none other than Platinum games. Like the metal it's named after, Platinum always brings out good games. Mad World, Bayonetta, Vanquish, all of those are their creation. So why I am not excited for Anarchy Reigns?

Anarchy Reigns is an online action combat game. You control several characters and fight in an over the top, bloody, and hilarious manner. Fighters include Jack from Mad World, in color this time (BBBOOOO), an ice queen, a cyber ninja, a scientist with electrical powers, a mecha, and a fat guy that turns into a lizard.

That sounds like the most awesome game ever, yet I can't get excited, WHY?! Well, maybe because this game completely slipped my mind. While I'm sure that it will be up by the usual high standards that Platinum has given themselves, but it doesn't tickle me, and I find that very disappointing. Sorry Platinum, but the Anarchy doesn't seem to reign over me.

Thumbs Up/Down:

A very conflicted Thumb to the side.







# VIEWS: JANUARY-

## FINAL FANTASY XIII-2

Release Date: January 31st (NA), February 2nd (AUS), 3rd (EU)

Platform: PS3, Xbox 360

Hype Level: 3/10



g1 MadHero15 thinks:

To say that Final Fantasy XIII left a lot of people cold would be an understatement. While the game has its defenders, the game was mostly panned by fans who hated the tiny corridors that made up most of the game, a story that mostly contained awful, and a battle system which never made you feel like you were in control. Now, despite the hate, Square Enix has decided to make a sequel.

Taking place 3 years after the first game, Lightning and Snow have both gone missing. Serah (Lightning's sister) is on a quest to find her along with a mysterious boy known as Noelle, who is from **THA FUTURE!!!!** Gameplay wise things have been added, like the ability to tame beasts, a Mass Effect style conservation tree, multiple endings, Quick Time Events (ugh), and the ability to travel through time Chrono Trigger style (which can cause the multiple endings previously mentioned).

I tried my best to enjoy XIII, but I couldn't. That's also the reason I sold it later on. While I commend Square Enix for listening to the complaints and actually try to change some things, the damage has already been done. Most people who have played it seem to have said that it's just XIII with QTE's, and if that's the case, SE needs to sit in the corner and think about what they've done.

Thumbs Up/Down:

A time-travelling Thumbs Down



# -VIDEO GAME PRE

## NEVERDEAD

Release Date: January 31st (NA), February 3rd (EU)

Platform: Xbox 360, PS3

Hype Level: 4/10

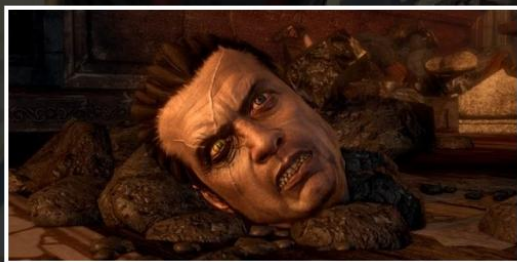
g1 MadHero15 thinks:

What if your main character was immortal? That is the question Rebellion seeks to ask with their latest title, Neverdead. It's an interesting concept, but is it something that can be done in a video game?

You play Bryce, a demon hunter cursed with immortality, and you must stop a demonic invasion together with a female P.I. named Arcadia. The gimmick in the game is that you can't die, at all it seems. You can lose body parts, up to the point where you're nothing but a head. This is useful for a few puzzles and to defeat certain monsters.

I must say that I like the concept of the game, but only to a degree. An immortal protagonist (at least the way this game portrays it) seems to remove any sense of challenge or threat the game has to offer. From trailers, it doesn't look like the story and gameplay will help it much either. The story looks cheesy and forgettable, and though I haven't played, it looks very clunky to control. I could be wrong, but that's the impression I get from it, and that's not a good sign.

Thumbs Up/Down:  
a immortal Thumbs Down







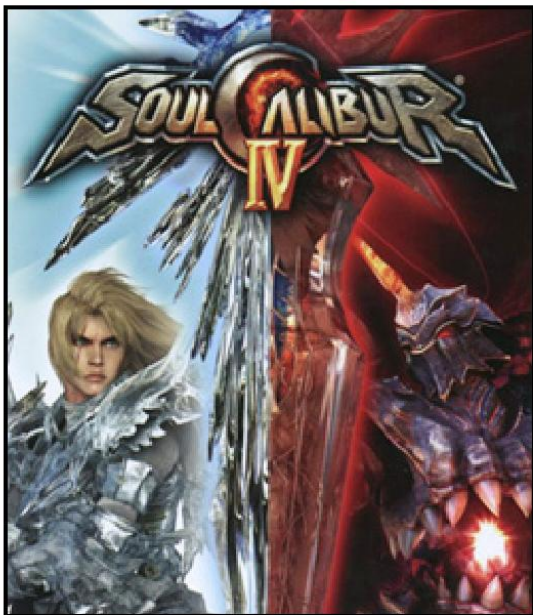
# VIEWS: JANUARY-

## SOUL CALIBUR V

Release Date: January 31st (NA), February 3rd (EU)

Platform: Xbox 360, PS3

Hype Level: 7/10



g1 MadHero15 thinks:

Even though the flagship fighting franchise (alliteration FTW) of Namco is Tekken, the popularity of the Soul Calibur series is nothing to scoff at either. Now after 4 years (Broken Destiny doesn't count), a new numbered entry will arrive, featuring a mostly new cast of characters. Does the soul still burn strong?

V takes place 17 years after IV. This means that some old characters have died or just grown too old for this shit. While mainstays such as Siegfried and Ivy are still around, a lot of new warriors have arrived. This includes Patraklos and Pryyha, son and daughter of Sophitia, Xiba the monkey boy (spiritual successor of Kilik), and per tradition, a character from a completely different series. This time Ezio from Assassin's Creed. Technical changes include the removal of the Soul Gauge and Critical Finishes, and some fun additions like a improved Character Creator.

I don't play a lot of Soul Calibur. Not because I think its bad, but mostly because I like other fighters more (I do like II a lot). Still, V interests me because it's pretty ballsy to replace most of your cast with new characters. Also, the weapon based fighting still hasn't gotten old and I doubt that this game will screw thing up now. In my mind, the Soul still burns, and V will be a worthy entry to the beloved franchise.

Thumbs Up/Down: Crazy Narrator Thumbs Up





# -VIDEO GAME PRE

## RESIDENT EVIL REVELATIONS

Release Date: January 27th (EU), February 7th (NA), Q4 2012 (AUS)

Platform: Nintendo 3DS

Hype Level: 7/10

g1 MadHero15 thinks:

Even though the 3DS has had a rough start, it seems to be getting up, and Capcom is one of its main supporters. Not only do they show that with Street Fighter and Monster Hunter, and also now with a full entry of the popular Resident Evil series. Not a spin-off, an actual installment into the main canon. Will it make the franchise scary again like it promises to do, or will it be as big of a disappointment as RE 5 (sorry Stickman)

Taking place between 4 and 5, the game stars Chris "biceps" Redfield and Jill "not blonde yet" Valentine. They'll fight an evil bioterrorist organization known as Il VeLtro. They do this while split apart, with new characters as partners like Parker Luciani and Jessica Sherawat. Part of the game will take place on a ship, though the main setting is Europe. Gameplay wise its similar to the previous titles, with a few additions such a FPS mode while shooting (optional), gyroscope usage for scanning (also optional), a multiplayer option called Raid Mode, and a emphasis on weather.

I've never found Resident Evil games all too scary. The scary parts were created more out of frustration instead of sheer fright. Still, I applaud Capcom for going back to its roots. Revelations looks pretty damn good, and while not all entries in the series have been good, Capcom treats its zombie baby pretty well, and I'm sure that Revelations will be a fine game, and a great addition to the 3ds lineup.

Thumbs Up/Down: Zombified Thumbs Up





# VIEWS: JANUARY-

## THE DARKNESS II

Release Date: February 7th (NA), 10th (EU)

Platform: Xbox 360, PS3, PC, Wii U

Hype Level: 8/10



g1 MadHero15 thinks:

I should probably come clean, I've never played the original Darkness before. I want to, because I'm a fan of story driven FPS's (a la Bioshock). I've been trying to find a used copy for a reasonable price, but no dice (he he, rhyme). Now that a sequel is coming out, I feel more and more inclined to play the first game. Will The Darkness II live up to its supposedly awesome predecessor?



Taking place 2 years after the first one, Jackie Estacade has become Don of the Franchetti thanks to his control over the Darkness (some evil shit voiced by Mike Patton). After some mobs try to take his again, The Darkness reawakens. Cue corrupt Priests, other people who want the Darkness, and find out what The Darkness itself wants. New features include a more cel shaded look like the comic it was based on, a co-up mode, and the ability to use firearms and the Darkness at the same time



While the original developers aren't working on this game (they're too busy with the Syndicate remake), I have good faith that the Darkness II will impress. Demos sent to game critics have been given high praise, and the game looks very interesting and fun. I'll first have to play the first one to see if I want to get the sequel, but The Darkness II so far looks to be one hell of a time.

Thumbs Up/Down: A Dark Thumbs Up





# -VIDEO GAME PRE

## INVERSION

Release Date: February 7th (NA), 10th (EU)

Platform: PC, PS3, XBOX 360

Hype Level: 4/10

### g1 MadHero15 thinks:

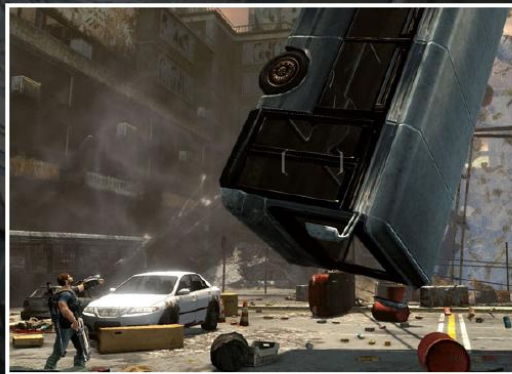
Third Person shooters have it rough. Gears of War dominates the genre and therefore other TPS' steal its ideas and mechanics. They need something special to stand out. The latest in this line of clones is Inversion, whose main gimmick is gravity manipulation. Can this be enough to kick Gears from its throne?

Sometime in the future, big fat aliens come down to Earth and start to wreck our shit. The aliens however made the dumb mistake of killing your wife and kidnapping your daughter, and now it's time to fight back. Armed with a special gun that allows you to change gravity and 16-player multiplayer, you'll take it all back.

I feel that Inversion is too cowardly to go full out with its intriguing premise. Everything I've read and seen from this game makes it seem like Saber Interactive played it safe instead of fully commit to their main gimmick (the same problem that I had with their previous title TimeShift). But with that gimmick gone, you just have another Gears clone, which no one really wants.

Thumbs up/Down:

A upside down Thumbs Up (so a thumbs down)





# VIEWS: JANUARY-

## KINGDOMS OF AMALUR: RECKONING

Release Date: February 7th (NA) 10th (EU)

Platform: Xbox 360, PS3, PC

Hype Level: 8/10



g1 MadHero15 thinks:

For the longest time, I struggled to find reasons why I should care about Kingdoms of Amalur. To me, it looked like another Fantasy RPG. However, as I read and saw more of the game, I got more excited about it, and now it looks like something I would like to buy.

The game takes place in Amalur (created by fantasy writer R.A. Salvatore), and you are a blank slate. By that I mean is that you have no destiny, and you're free to carve one of your own. There are 5 regions, 4 races, and 3 skill trees with 22 options each. Art-work is done by Spawn creator Todd McFallarne, and overall design is done by Ken Wayward, who previously worked on Morrowind and Oblivion.

This dream team is one of the reasons I'm excited about this game. The developers are saying it's a combination between God of War and Skyrim, though I disagree. It looks more like a cross between Skyrim and Fable, and since I'm a fan of both games, I think that's great. We'll have to wait and see if Amalur is more than the standard Tolkien world, and if it can compete with the big boys, but I'm so far very intrigued by what 38 and Big Huge Games have created.

Thumbs Up/Down: A Thumbs Up





# -VIDEO GAME PRE

## RHYTHM HEAVEN FEVER

Release Date: February 13th

Platform: Wii

Hype Level: 6/10

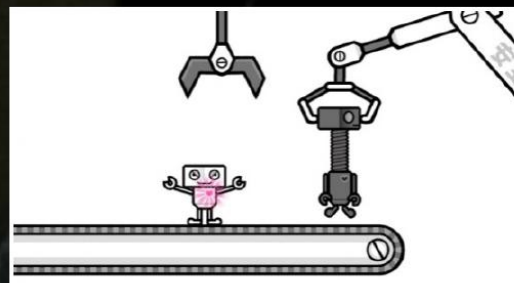
g1 MadHero15 thinks:

The original Rhythm Heaven was a runaway success on the DS. With its catchy beats, adorable graphics, and addicting nature, it quickly became very popular despite being a new IP. Now its trying to move its success to the Wii, as one of the last big releases for the console. Can it tap its way to success

To my legitimate surprises, Fever won't be using any motion controls. Instead, it uses simple button commands. Like the previous game, you tap to the beat on order to get into the rhythm. It's literally a game you can play with your eyes closed. Also new to the series is multi-player, which allows you to play with 2 different people to beat the beat together.

Fever may be one of the only game where my excitement dampened because there aren't any motion controls. Maybe it's me, but it seems a lot more to wave your Remote to the beat rather than just pressing some buttons. With this being made by the WarioWare guys, you'd think they'd come up with interesting stuff. I still think the game will be fun, but not worth the 40 dollar price tag it'll most likely have.

Thumbs Up/Down: A beat-tastic Thumbs Up, though not a very big one





# VIEWS: JANUARY-

## BINARY DOMAIN

Release Date: February 14th

Platform: PS3, Xbox 360

Hype Level: 5/10

g1 MadHero15 thinks:

O lookie here, another squad and cover based Third Person Shooter. How freaking original. So what does this one have? Ok, ok, I'll be fair to this game, but I can't help it. SEGA has had success before with the genre thanks to Vanquish (though that was mostly Platinum), and Team Yakuza isn't a bad developer. Will Binary Domain stand out from the crowd?

Set in 2080, robots have become a little too human. Not only have they developed emotions, but also pride and ego, meaning that they want to kill all humans and be the next line of evolution. Dan (that's you) and his squad mates are out to stop the robots. The big deal about Binary Domain is the Consequence system, which bases your squad mate's performance on trust. Say your buddy makes a sexist joke. When you laugh at it, you'll trust each other more, but the female squad mates will like you less. This can be done with either button or voice commands (using a headset)

Binary Domain has interesting ideas going for it, but I don't think that's enough. It needs a solid story and great shooting mechanics. The story from the trailers look like Terminator crossed with IRobot, and previews have stated that the shooting is only ok. As of now, I'm completely indifferent to it, and couldn't care less if this game came out. Hope that the game proves me wrong.

Thumbs Up/Down: A robotic Thumb to the side







# -VIDEO GAME PRE

## TWISTED METAL

Release Date: February 14th

Platform: PS3

Hype Level: 8/10

g1 MadHero15 thinks:

Remember Blur? That one racing game that marketed itself as a more adult version of Mario Kart? Well it bombed, and the true owner of that title is finally coming back after a 7 year hiatus. Twisted Metal is set to bring the series back to relevance and become another great exclusive title for the PS3. Can David Jaffe and the guys from Eat Sleep Play bring it all back?

Unlike the rest of the games, the reboot only stars 4 characters, all part of a different faction and campaign. Series mascot Sweet Tooth, fan favorites Dollface and Mr.Grimm, and new character Preacher are the only characters available. However, the main focus of the game is Online Multiplayer. One mode called Nuke Mode has you destroy a statue from the opposing team, using the leader as a rocket. There's also the standard deathmatch and races.

Everything I've seen of Twisted Metal makes it look like one hell of a great time. I may say it's Mario Kart for grownups, but does Mario Kart have transforming ice cream trucks, missile launchers, and helicopters? No, no it hasn't. The game looks very fun to play, and David Jaffe has done a tremendous job bringing the series back. Good to have you back Sweet Tooth.

Thumbs Up/Down: A Crazy Thumbs Up





# VIEWS: JANUARY-

## TEKKEN 3D PRIME EDITION

Release Date: February 14th (NA), 17th (EU)

Platform: 3DS

Hype Level: 6/10



g1 MadHero15 thinks:

As said before, the 3DS has become a great machine for fighting game fans. Street Fighter, Blazblue, and Dead or Alive has made sure of that. That title won't go to waste it seems, as Tekken also joins the line-up. Not just featuring the game, but a movie as well, it is enough to stand out from the crowd.

Prime Edition doesn't seem to have a story mode, at least not one that I can find. The game will mostly be based on Tekken 6, featuring all of the characters that appeared in that game. The game will run at 60 FPS even with the 3D on (something other fighters have failed to do so far). Online multiplayer is also there of course. The biggest addition however, is that not only will you get a game, but also the movie Blood Vengeance.

I'm not sure if just adding a 90 minute movie which while hilarious, isn't very good qualifies as a replacement for a story mode. It's Tekken, and it doesn't really seem like they're making anything special. Still, it's Tekken, and the formula hasn't grown stale yet, so having a portable version of it with me is kind of cool.

Thumbs Up/Down:

Robotic Panda riding Thumbs Up (watch the movie, you'll understand)







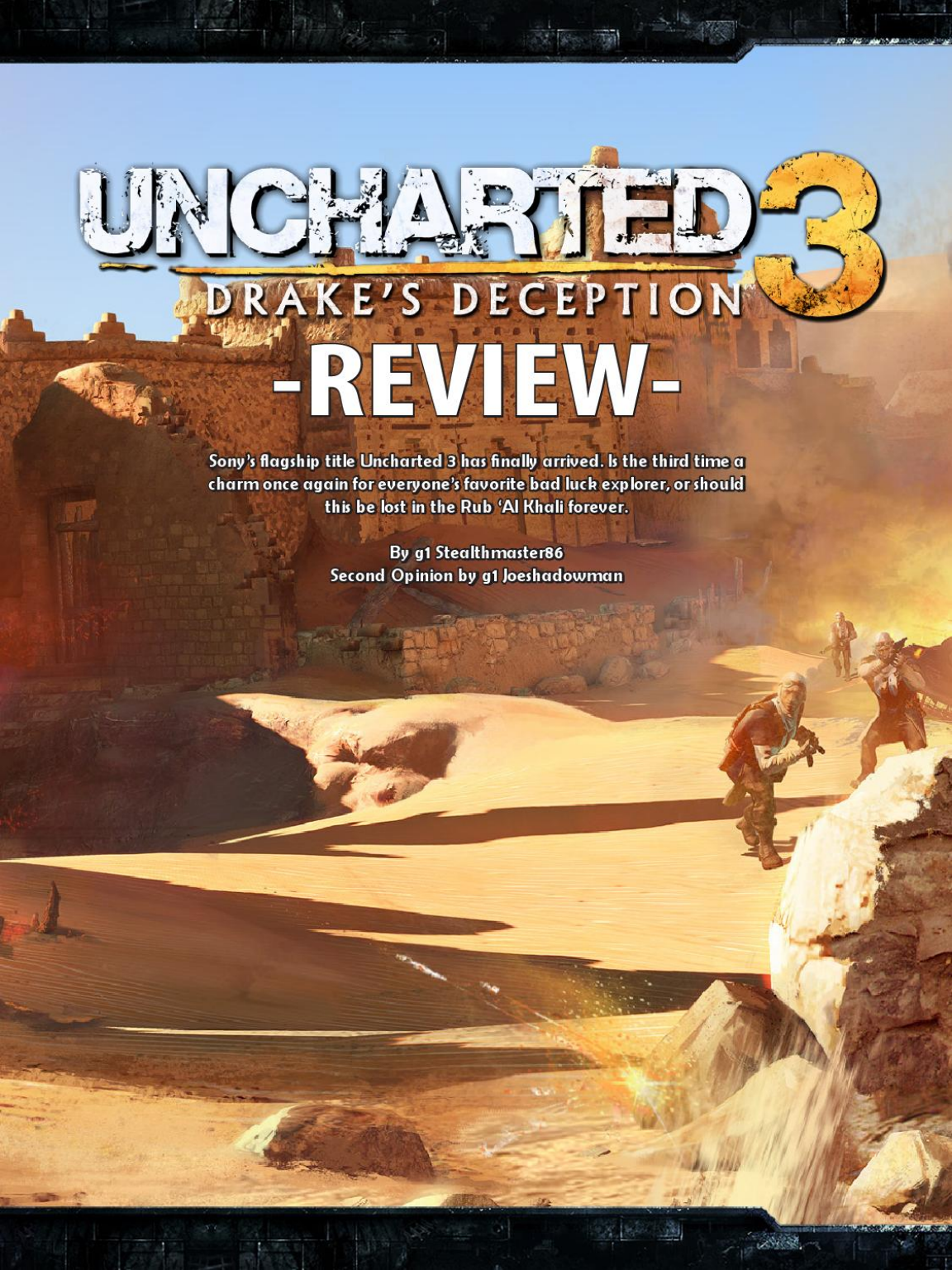
# UNCHARTED 3

DRAKE'S DECEPTION

## -REVIEW-

Sony's flagship title Uncharted 3 has finally arrived. Is the third time a charm once again for everyone's favorite bad luck explorer, or should this be lost in the Rub 'Al Khali forever.

By g1 Stealthmaster86  
Second Opinion by g1 Joeshadowman













## Uncharted 3: Drake's Deception

Developers:  
Naughty Dog

Publisher:  
Sony Entertainment

System:  
Playstation 3

Release Date: November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011



### STORY

The thing that sets the Uncharted Series most anything is the story. Each game has a great story and this is no different. The story is just as good with the rest of the series.

The story of Nathan Drake and Victor Sullivan is fleshed out here and what happens to them is easily the best of the series. It never feels once that Victor Sullivan, or other characters for that matter, was just sidekicks for Drake to interact with.

They feel for each other and the relationship of each character feels more real than it has ever done. There are a few notable flaws within the story and it felt that there was much more going on than what it seems.

One of the main focuses on the story is Nathan Drake's Ring. It was made to be part of a much bigger puzzle to find the lost city of Ubar in the Rub'Al Khali Desert.

The main villains this time around would have been great characters, but compared to Uncharted 2, they don't seem that much of a



threat. What would have made it better would be the chance to really dig deep into Drake as a character outside his small circle

of friends. Katherine Marlowe is smarter than any other villains the past games had and here it does not seem like she could do much.



## GAMEPLAY

The gameplay is just the same as before, but with a few differences. The action is fierce and intense this time around. What you do in this game astounds me. One minute you are in a sinking ship to its side and in the next you are dangling from a plane about to crash. It does do a few things repeated from the last game, but giving how great those scenes are I am going to forgive them for now. Each enemy you encounter will take a lot of damage before falling. Even the "weaker" enemies take a few extra bullets than it needs to. This makes the game harder on normal than it was in *Uncharted 2*. All this reminds me of is the normal difficulty on *Uncharted 1* than in *Uncharted 2*.

In some sections it will seem like the enemies soaking in bullets is not the problem, but the number of guards there is and where they attack from. In *Uncharted 2* it was possible to favor Stealth over a full blown gun battle. Here, stealth seems like it was taking a vacation for a while. Take out a guy by snapping his neck and there's a high chance of someone heard it and a gun fight starts. However, Melee is better than ever with different moves you can do; it does come in a downside. Once you start fighting there is very small window to escape from it. So if you have a sniper beam pointing at your head while fighting, there is a good chance that the fight won't kill you. The bullet to the head will.



I would advise not to start fighting in the stairs. Doing so will cause Drake's animation become off-kilter and start freaking out. The gun's accuracy is a bit of a mess. You can be right up top of someone and you can't hit anything. It's rare that it happens and it does get annoying when it does.

The accuracy of the enemies is impossibly accurate. In one section you will be in a sandstorm and you can't see a thing. The enemies, however, can see your every move, even though you cannot see them. It makes that section of the game harder than it needs to be. I would have liked that during this sequence you can walk past guards as you take them

out over the cover of the storm. (It should be noted that this review was written long before the aiming patch was implemented. Aiming should be better now.)

The Puzzles are far more interesting than the past games and there is a few more than the first two had. The difficulty of the puzzles can range from easy to moderately hard. The reason why it would be hard is because you didn't look thoroughly enough.

Every piece and every clue you need to solve a puzzle is in that room. Unlike *Drake's Fortune* and *Among Thieves* your journal won't help you that much. It won't solve the puzzle, only clue you in. It's pretty much useless now.







## GRAPHICS

The graphics are as amazing as ever. Naughty Dog knows the Playstation 3 hardware like no other.

Every detail is painstakingly put together it's hard to believe that this was made in the span of two years. The characters look more believable than ever. Every pore, every string of hair, ever fingernail is in a detail that very few games have matched.

If this was shown at E3 2005 people would question if this was real or not than Killzone 2 and that is only the models of Drake, Sully, and the rest of the cast. The locations are, once again, stunning.

Even if a location is far away and there is no way to get to it. They are still made in a way that textures are there making it the most believable world outside of real life.

There are rarely any pop ups and frame rate drops. It's all smooth running at a solid 30 Frames per Second. This is what the Playstation 3 looks like when pushing to its absolute limit.

## SOUND

Nolan North, Richard McGonagle, Emily Rose and Claudia Black are all back. Graham McTavish is also back but in entirely different role from Among Thieves. The cast proves once again why they are some of the best voice actors around. While Nolan North plays Nathan Drake in a way that we begin to believe that Nolan North is Nathan Drake. Emily Rose steals the show. Elena Fisher is my most favorite character in the series. Even in the more personal moments in the game, she feels and sounds real. More real than any other female character from every game ever. If gaming needed a female character to look up to it should be Elena Fisher.

The rest of the sound is phenomenal. Each gun that fires has their own sound and feel. Unfortunately, the weight of the guns doesn't feel heavy at all. One thing that the series don't get a lot of attention to is the music. The music is just as great as in the past games. It builds up the action and it slows down when it needs to be. This is soundtrack ready and would gladly have some of the themes on my music collection.

## DIFFICULTY

Uncharted 3 isn't that hard of a game. You can beat the game in about 8 to 10 hours depending of the difficulty you choose. Do have to warn you though there is this one over long sequence of the game that is pretty much brutal. This makes the past games rough spots seem like a breeze.

There is this one enemy combo I will not be surprised if other games take it. It's the Sniper and Launcher combo. The Launcher will draw you out and the sniper will pick you off. While dodging all this you would have to deal with the people with Shotguns at your floor moving in on you.

This is the one sequence of the game where I had the most difficult with. The big problem with is that it's not even that fun. It feels like a chore more than anything. Even playing it on Very Easy wasn't fun at all. While it doesn't have the supernatural elements that much compared to the first two games there is another sequence where it gets hard. It happens towards the end of the game, which I will not spoil here.







## REPLAYABILITY

This is where Uncharted 3 crashes. One of the best parts about the first two games was its high Replayability factor. It had tons of unlocks like 'making of' videos and tweaks.

The tweaks could range from Costume change, character change, to changing the very game itself. There would be No Gravity, Infinite Ammo, weapon select, and even screen change like Black and White and Mirror World.

This and much more made playing the games feel like a whole new game. I clocked in at over 120 hours on the single player alone on Among Thieves. So it sad to hear that none of that stuff is in Uncharted 3.

After finishing the game, before I knew this, I had a plan to play the entire game as London Drake and it was going to be awesome. No, that is not meant to be.

Uncharted3 is still a fantastic game, but because they didn't have all the tweaks you can use, it's very hard to say that it's worth buying.

## MULTIPLAYER

I'm just going to say this right now. I'm not a huge Multiplayer gamer. When I buy games I buy them for single player. The Multiplayer is just something they slap into to sale more games. Having said this I am going to talk about it briefly. I played the June Beta for Uncharted 3 and I LOVED it. It had everything a multiplayer needs to have. Challenging but fair gameplay, fun gameplay modes, great weapons, sprinting is great, and an awesome buddy system. This would be the game that would finally change my stance on Multiplayer.

Take everything I've said and throw it out the window because none of that is in the final version. The multiplayer is challenging but not fair. There are no fun game modes, even though it's the same modes as before.

The weapons are not fun to play around with. And there is not really a buddy system. The aiming is much too slow, the hit boxes are much too small, you can infinite sprint. Because you can infinite sprint and move freely there are, at least the last time I played it,

people that will just rush you and give you a chest full of buckshot. Not a lot of people aim anymore because of the sprint.

In the beta sprinting was only there to get you out of a tight jam. It didn't last long and turning was more of a risk than reward. Now sprinting feels like it does in Call of Duty or Halo. It's not really fun at all anymore.

## CONCLUSION

Uncharted 3: Drake's Deception takes everything you love about the first two games and safely takes it up to 11. It has it's rough spots, but the action and set pieces are a thing of beauty.

It does not do anything really new and the things that made Uncharted great to begin with continues to shine here. But lack of tweaks and a weak multiplayer mode keeps this from becoming like Uncharted 2: Among Thieves.

It's still worth playing to see what the system can do and see what Naughty Dog has created.

It all feels like two steps forward and one step back.



**Rating 8/10 - Rent It**







# Second Opinion

If I were to tell you that I didn't have High expectation for this game I would be lying. Simply put this was one of my most anticipated games of 2011. I even went out and pre-ordered it months before it was released. That's how great the series is. The second game captivated me in such a way that I just knew that this game was going to be awesome. But could my Pre-judgment have lead me astray?

by g1 loeshadowman

**The Uncharted series is by far one of the most impressive series in recent history. It not only shows how far the PS3 has come, but it also shows how far games in general have gotten. Uncharted 2 is considered among many to be the best game on the PS3. It was giving countless awards including game of the year. It is simply a great game. In this installment Naughty Dog hopes to capture the same accomplishment that game had.**

## STORY

The game begins with Nathan and Sully walking into a bar to conduct a business deal. It quickly goes south. Then you find yourself playing as a young Nathan meeting Sully for the first time. Showing that the core theme of this game is the relationship between Nathan and Sully. Something I'm glad the developers did. This however isn't all the story has to offer.

You have returning characters joining the adventure along with some new faces. They are welcomed additions to the series and I generally liked them. One being Charlie, he is a close friend of Nathan and is willing to do a lot of things for him, making him loyal. However, he also has a phobia and is in one point of

the game used by the villains. There are other ones but I just really liked Charlie. He has a lot of character; which shows just how good Naughty Dog is when it comes to characters.

The villains feel like a threat, and they also have something to do with Nathan's and Sully's past. This helps with the tension in the game, pushing Nathan to do things he hasn't done before. This game is called Drakes Deception for a reason, as you never know what Nathan is really after. Is it to uncover an ancient secret, or to put the other guys in their place? It isn't really that clear until around the ending of the game.

As such, you see how it effects the people around him and just how far everyone is willing to go. Most notably Sully. Nathan drags

him just about everywhere in this game. The games message is simple. I won't tell you what it is as I think you should play the game to find out about it.

The story is among one of the best in any form of media today, and is one of the best that any game had offer from 2011. If I had to think of something that did annoy me about the story it would have to be that Nathan and Elena are broken up again.

This is only a mild complaint and doesn't really do anything to the overall story of the game. Naughty Dog knows how to give a good narration and a satisfying story that just makes you fall in love with the characters involved.

**STORY GETS A 9.9/10**





### GAMEPLAY

If you have played any of the other Uncharted games then you already know how this game plays. Wall climbing is just as smooth as always, and the gunplay reminds about the same. However, the fist fighting has changed almost drastically in a good way, it flows more fluently. You really get the impression that you are in a real brawl. As for the puzzles, I like them. They are well constructed and feel natural to the environment. The puzzles start off easy and gradually get hardy as with the difficulty of the game. Puzzles are what Sony does best and this game proves it. For example, there is a puzzle in the game that involves you having to put the cogs in the right order.



Ranging from size to the design on the cogs. There is also another one that involves you walking on the right tiles in the right order. Of course my favorite puzzle has to do with you moving tiles around on a board to match up with some holograms on the floor. Enemies aren't your average enemies from other games.

They will try to flank you and are really good at it. One secret you will be focusing on a group of people that are taking cover behind a pillar shooting at you, and the next you get shot from behind. This forces you to think about your next move. You never know where and when the enemy will get behind you. It's a welcome addition to any game because you only feel like you accomplish something.

### GRAPHICS

This game looks awesome. I have never seen graphics this good in a game before in my life. The scenery looks amazing. You should take your time to look around as the developers did put a lot of time and effort into the visuals and it shows. Naughty Dog showed just how powerful the PS3 can be when it comes to graphics. These are even better than what Battlefield 3 has to offer. (At least for the Console versions.) If there is one thing that the developers of today should take from Naughty Dog it's the way they should make games look.

There is color everywhere. Even at its darkest, this game has more color than most modern games at their brightest. I didn't experience much, if any, texture problems. The characters also look very detailed and the water physics are quite impressive. Everything breaths and feels alive. This game looks like a well put together piece of art.

### THESE GRAPHICS ARE A 10/10









Unlike other games that have enemies stacking up in a door way wearing big shoot me signs. Also, I don't know if this was intentional, but most of the enemies wear dark colors and the more you get hit the grayer your screen gets. This effects your accuracy as you have a harder time seeing the enemy. I welcome this only because it gives the game an extra amount of difficulty.

Now Uncharted has always had a good amount of parkour. I am glade to say that it returns and is better than ever. Working as their own little puzzles and adding a great amount of excitement. This is especially true when you have to shoot while hanging from a ledge. While this isn't new to the series, it finally has evolved to a point where it works naturally. There are points in the game where you have a choice to sneak around and stealthily take out a small group of people. If done right, you can avoid having to fight off an even larger group.

They are few and fall between but that only makes them more welcome. Of cores it wouldn't be Uncharted it they didn't have some exiting cinematic like levels. One such level is when you have to chase down a cruise liner occupied by pirates. You have to fight off three or four other pirate ships full of pirates just to get to the ship. When you finally make it on the ship you fight around looking for something until you sink the ship. That is when the real cinematic experience begins.



You have to escape the ship as it begins to fill with water. It only gets worse when you have to run in a hallway that is gushing with water that is almost constantly right behind you. The multiplayer is sort of a mix bag for me. The Co-Op Arena is great. It forces you to work with your partners to overcome certain specific objectives ranging from a simple survival mode where you have to survive a wave of enemies.

A treasure hunter mode were you have to take two heavy statues across the map to a chest. Finally there is a mode called Sedge where you have to fight off a wave of enemies in a specific area on the map. As the game continues the enemies become stronger and smarter. The progression is well set, even if it takes a lot of bullets to kill some guys. The Co-Op Adventure is a mode were you team up with two other people to take on a campaign mode that

is separate from the main story. They are all very well done and focus on team work. I like them. However, the Competitive side of the game is a bit unbalanced and is okay.

I don't really care about it because of the level system. I'm not saying that competitive games shouldn't have level systems. I'm just saying that competitive modes shouldn't have a level system. Sadly though this game isn't perfect. I accoutered numerous glitches. While they aren't game braking they can sometimes get in the way. It's frustrating at times because they can almost get you killed. They might be miner at best, but they do frustrate me.

It's because of that that I have to give the gameplay an **8.8/10**. I really like the gameplay but the glitches do get in the way sometimes. Also, I am getting tired of levels in competitive modes.





## SOUND

To start out the music is still inspiring and fits the games overall climatic feel. It doesn't really have any new themes but they do work for this game. The voice acting is just grate. The voice actors have the characters down perfectly.

They know how to give strong performances. Giving the right amount of emotion that doesn't come off as over reactive. They bring a level of depth to the scenes that most games wish they had. It serves as a good reason for why Hollywood shouldn't make a live-action movie as I don't think people would warm up to the characters without their real voices.

If Hollywood really wants to make a good movie they should just higher Naughty Dog to write and animate the movie. Then higher the original voice acting team from the game.

That's how good the voice actors are. I could never imagine anyone else playing these roles. It will only come off as subpar at best. As usually the series has delivered in the sound department.

**THE SOUND GETS A 9.9/10**

## REPLAYABILITY

There is a lot of things in this game you might miss on your first play through. So you're going to want to play through this game at least twice. Me; I played through it three times. Once on Normal to play through the story. Once on its hardest difficulty to see if there was anything the game had to offer on it hardest difficulty. And again to get all the hidden treasures in the game. The Multi-player is always fun to come back to and the Co-Op is completely awesome.

**THE REPLAY VALUE IS AT AN ALL-TIME HIGH 9.5/10.**

## CONCLUSION

This is one of the reasons for why I love the PS3. It lived up to its expectations and pretty much set the bar for action adventure games.

The graphics are the best I've ever seen in any game and the gameplay is pretty sold. However there are a few glitches that hold the game back. They don't break the game, but they do get annoying really fast.

They won't stop you from enjoying the game, but they will push you to nerd like rage at some points.

**-PROS-**

- ▲ Best Graphics I've ever seen in a game.
- ▲ Great Gameplay.
- ▲ Solid Co-Op.
- ▲ Great Voice acting.
- ▲ One of the best stories I've seen in a game.
- ▲ Good amount of difficulty.

**-CONS-**

- ▼ Mildly annoying Glitches.
- ▼ Competitive Multi-player is a little unbalanced.
- ▼ Enemies in the Co-Op Arena are sometimes over powered.

**Buy It, Rent It, F\*\*\* It?**

**Overall: 9/10. You will enjoy this game. If you ever want to look for a reason for why you need to own a PS3 look no further than this. Buy it.**





# THE LEGEND OF ZELDA

El Rey



Chapter 4  
La Cama de Piedra.



.....

Am I...dead yet?

No?

Maybe...They started counting...too soon... Should I start over?

They're ...helping me?

I'll just wait.

Somehow, I Feel better.

They don't need a reason to help you.  
Even though they have one.

What?

They just want to protect  
what they cherish the most  
just like you do.

Who's that?

It's me! I mean, it's you.

Oh, I see, I'm  
hallucinating already.

Maybe, but don't you wanna live?

I...I don't know.

You actually do, specially because you  
have lots of questions and few answers  
and you don't want to leave just like that.

I have a few answers?

Of course you do! Search  
deep into your memory.

What am I searching for?

You're searching for the answers.  
Others have been telling you what you  
didn't want to listen to.

Really?

And you've been oblivious  
to their words

This is insane.

You already have doubts about  
Dongoron and Aghanim. You even raised  
your sword against Lady Aveil.

But she was about to  
kill an innocent girl.

Exactly, you defied her  
because you swore to  
protect the people.

Yeah, I did

There are still many  
unanswered questions.

If you want to know the answers,  
then there's one thing you can do for us.

What?





...live!

LIVE!

You're damn right!

I mean...that's right!

I can't let myself die just yet!

I may be confused.

These people keep telling me there's something wrong going on. I still don't believe Ganondorf is a bad person, I swore allegiance to my Lord and I'm a man of honor!

But my heart tells me there is something wrong, I don't know why, but I can feel it.

These people are suffering, and before my oath to my Lord, there's my oath to the people I swore to defend and I will do anything in my power to stop the sadness and sorrow.

What does it matter this stupid mark of the traitor? I don't care if it's written that I shall defeat Lord Ganondorf. I've made it this far listening to myself, no one forced me to walk down this path.

No one will say what path should I follow but myself.

I don't know how, but I'll find a way to defy my destiny.

I don't have many answers yet, but I think I should start looking deep into my mind.

*Malon...*

You're the only one I think of right now

I wonder what you're doing.

You didn't want me to go.

You're always right.

Always...right?







"You know, the other day I went with my father to deliver some milk to the bay. The place is a total dumpster. It's so depressing to see how everything's out there."

"Have you noticed there are less gorons around here lately? I wonder what happened. I've heard their new leader is a horrible guy and many of them are fleeing to the woods."

"Have you seen things outside?  
The grass is not as green as it is here!!"

"Not everything is like  
you and your father think!"



"Remember those stories about the children of the forest?  
They say they used to play at night and you could hear their laughter  
if you were walking around the forest after the sunset.  
I used to hear them all the time but not anymore..."

"Another campaign?"

"Did I just imagine their laughs?"



"For a guy who claims to love peace,  
that Ganondorf sure likes to fight against  
a bunch of farmers."

"Not that he actually fights,  
he only sends you to do the work."





Maybe the rebels lie.  
But I'm certain about  
something.

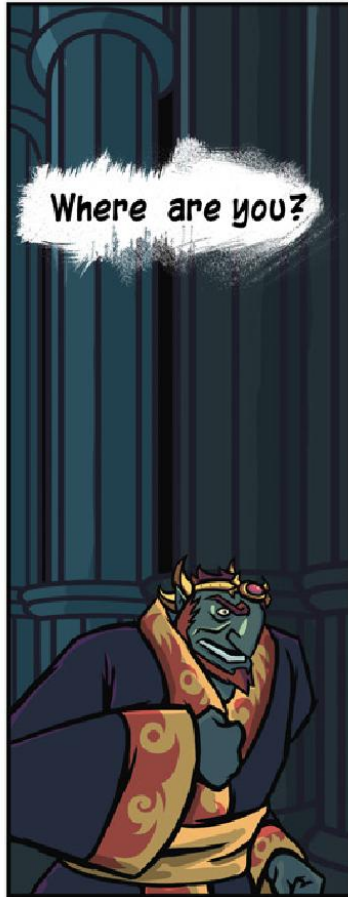
You're always right.

Besides,  
I made you a promise, and like I said,  
I'm a man of honor and I will keep that  
promise.

*MALON, I'M COMING HOME!*


















Hey listen!

DANCE FOR US!

Hey listen!

Hey listen!

Hey listen!

Hey listen!

Hey listen!

Hey listen!

Hey listen!









# My Little Report: Analysis is Magic

## An In-Depth Look at the Episode

### "Bridle Gossip" from

## My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic

by g1 SideSmash

Hello there. Well, I honestly didn't expect to be in this position, but I've decided that in honor of the g1 community's infatuation with My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic; I am presenting an analysis of the show that I wrote for my Media Studies class.

The assignment was to analyze an episode children's television program and give an evaluation of the show overall. This will sound more professional than my usual reviews because... well, you know... high school. I'll be looking at the plot, characters, stereotypes, morals and lessons, and target audience. Let me reiterate: this was written for people who don't know about MLP. I hope you enjoy my honest first impressions of this Internet phenomenon, and it might give you a new perspective on the characters and morals on what could be your favorite television show. Also, disclaimer: I'm not a brony.

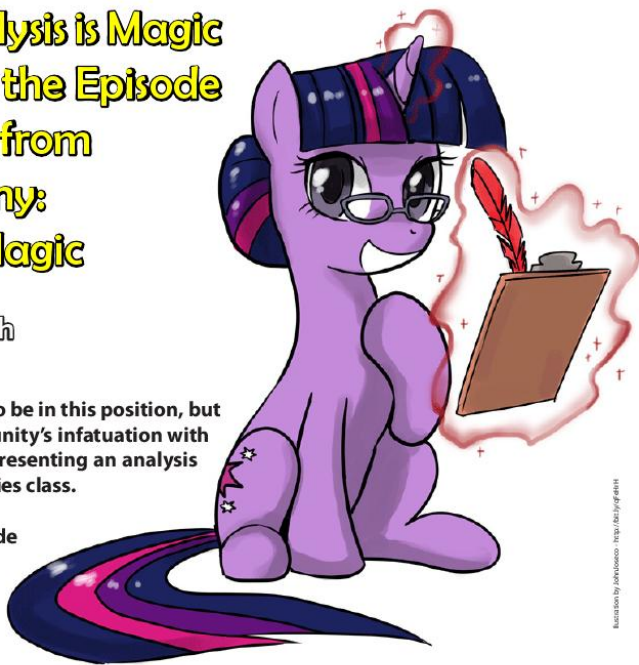


Illustration by JohnBarnes <http://mlp.fanfiction.net>

## THE PLOT

Our main character, Twilight

Sparkle (editor's note: try saying that out loud without at least smirking) and his assistant, Spike, are walking into Ponyville, the central location of the series, for a day of unexplained joy. Once they arrive though, the town is completely deserted. All the shops and services are closed, and before she can ask a question out loud, she's called over by her friends into a dark building. From the shop's window, Twilight's friends explain to her that they're all hiding from Zecora, a hooded figure feared by the town.

The ponies tell Twilight that they're hiding from the zebra because she looks different and lives outside of town. Twilight is confounded that they would be so excluding to Zecora simply because she's not a regular to the townsfolk, and indirectly encourages one of the



ponies' sister, Applebloom, to follow Zecora into the woods. When the ponies go after Applebloom, they enter the Everfree Forest, a strange place where everything feels out of order (for the ponies at least). After finding Applebloom, Zecora warns them in rhyme of the flowers they are standing on, called "Poison Joke." The next morning, the ponies discover that they've each been crippled in some way and incorrectly assume that Zecora cursed them through

the rhyming. Infuriated, the ponies storm Zecora's house and learn that the black-and-white mysterious figure warned them through her mandatory rhyming and didn't curse them.

The ponies apologize for their lack of understanding and with her help; they are restored back to normal. Zecora is also accepted by the whole town and the episode ends on a peachy note.





## THE MAIN CHARACTERS OF THE SHOW

### Twilight Sparkle

The main character of the series. She's the bookworm, the one who follows logic and logic alone. Even though she's a unicorn (a type of pony with magical abilities), she always looks to the books for the scientific answer. But even so, she's a kind and independent female that always stands for what's right and just. She's the unofficial leader of the group and represents friendship within the series' ubiquitous symbolism.

The poison joke handicaps her magical abilities, represented by large blue spots and floppy nature of her horn.



### Pinkie Pie

The preppy and hyperactive one. She's an Earth pony (the indistinguishable type) and serves as the town's party coordinator. While the characters are usually straightforward in their actions and dialogue, Pinkie exercises entropy (nature's favoring of randomness) in almost every episode.

She breaks into song, shatters the fourth wall, and even references existentialism a few times. She's always positive, which is reinforced by her representing of laughter within the group.



The poison joke renders her tongue as useless, preventing her from breaking out in song (which she does anyway).





## Fluttershy

The naïve and timid one. Her soft voice and fear of pretty much everything makes her the weakest and least reckless of all the ponies.

Although she was born a pegasus, she barely uses her wings and serves as the caretaker of the local wildlife. She's the least critical and the most sensitive, but her shy nature, humility, and undying kindness (what she represents within the group) has made her a fan favorite.



The poison joke changes her soft and beautiful voice into one of a middle-aged African American male (easily one of the best bits of the entire series).

## Applejack

The outgoing and adventurous one. Her Southern tongue freckles and cowboy hat accessory makes her the most distinguishable. As the town's apple harvester, she has grown to be less civilized and more down-and-dirty, but not to a tomboyish extent like Rainbow Dash.

Her business-centric lifestyle has, ironically, granted her absolute honesty, which is what she symbolizes.

The poison joke shrinks her to the size of an apple.



## Rainbow Dash

The tomboyish and competitive one. She's a pegasus (another type of pony with wings) and dreams of flying with the best in the kingdom. She's extremely competitive and hot-headed, especially as a flyer. Even though she's portrayed as a teenager, she possesses incredible powers, including the ability to break the sound barrier if she flies fast enough. She's still a good friend who represents loyalty in the group.

The poison joke eradicates her coordination, turning her "Dash" into "Crash."



## Rarity

The fashionista. Her entire personality is somewhat contradictory to what she symbolizes, as she is focussed entirely on clothing and attire. Although she can act quite arrogant at times, she represents generosity within the group's mythos.

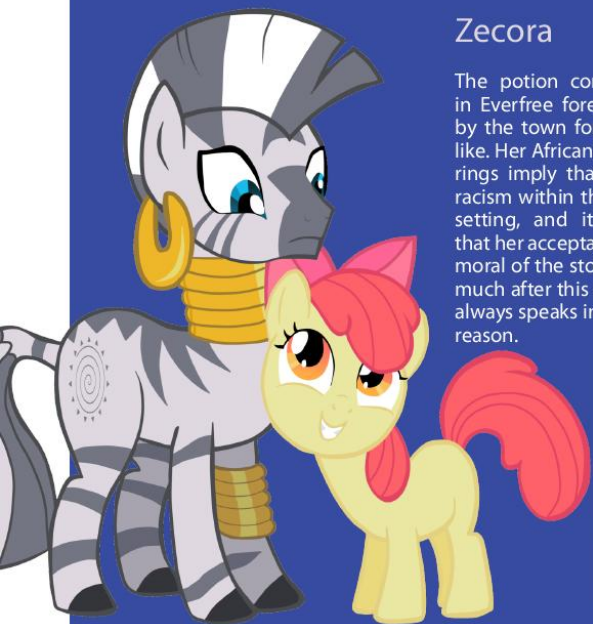
She always puts her friends before herself, no matter how painful it is for her mentally or physically.

The poison joke destroys any sense of order in her coveted hair.









## Zecora

The potion conjurer. She lives in Everfree forest and is feared by the town for what she looks like. Her African accent and neck rings imply that she represents racism within the context of the setting, and it becomes clear that her acceptance serves as the moral of the story. She isn't seen much after this episode, and she always speaks in rhyme for some reason.

## Applebloom

Applejack's little sister. She's the trigger for the rest of the plot after she becomes drawn to the mysterious Zecora. She also serves as a slice of irony after it's revealed that the only person who truly understands Zecora is the youngest pony in the episode's cast.



## STEREOTYPES

While it's not completely unacceptable, there are two big stereotypes in the episode. The first is Applejack, whose Southern characteristics are the only thing that differentiates her. She knows how to lasso and doesn't have much class. There isn't another pony within the main characters that represents a certain culture, which makes her entire concept extremely questionable. Rarity could represent high-society urban folk, but she's more of an archetype of a certain aspect of culture (fashion); Applejack's character rests on assumptions of Texans and Southerners.

The other stereotype is Zecora, which appears to be much more blatant and intentional. She possesses golden rings that stack on her neck, fancies a mohawk, lives away from civilization in a hut and has an African accent to top it all off. It's unclear whether children within the show's age group will understand the meanings of the characteristics, but her persona suggests a much heavier theme throughout the story. Her traits feel excessive, rarely fitting into the show. Of course, the writers probably intended it to be so.





## MORALS & LESSONS

The morals told directly in this episode and the morals that are implied are very different. At the end of every episode, Twilight reads a letter that she intends to send to her mentor discussing what she's learned about friendship in that episode. This is easily the worst part of the show, but it's there only because it was one of the very few things Hasbro demanded the writers to include. Twilight explains that one should never judge someone based on what they look like and uses one's face as the main example. It's a simple and important moral, but there seems to be so much more under the surface.

Zecora's aforementioned characteristics point to her representing the African culture and it's interesting to note that she's the only zebra in the series. When matching up African stereotypes and "don't judge a book by its cover" values, viewers get what many cartoon analysts like to call the "racism episode." Few shows outright describe the term, and Friendship is Magic is no exception. It uses the overarching moral as a gateway to confronting racism in a more intellectual way than other shows. Most cartoons will usually center on a conflict between two different colored sides, with each explaining how they don't like the other. It's much more blatant and unappealing, and it usually results in a loss of respect of the writers from the older fans. While Friendship is Magic doesn't completely falter through its racism, it feels all too forced.

But the episode doesn't just feature implied racism; rather, it gives the mature viewer a better outlook on the entire series. Near the beginning of the episode, the ponies are explaining to Twilight where Zecora lives, which is the Everfree Forest. They describe the Forest as a place that "just isn't natural," and use examples of its strangeness as a place where "the plants grow, the animals care for themselves, and the clouds move all on their own," with terrified tones in their voices. This is the show's most potent symbolism,



as it describes the unknown nearby woods as a metaphor for the "real" world. Everything that makes Friendship is Magic analytical and profound resonates from the theme it establishes in this very episode.

Ponyville and the kingdom of Equestria are all parts of the child's psychological state of well-being, where everything is extremely familiar and the world moves by the will of the child. This is described more casually as the "comfort zone," and it's a very powerful moral given to the viewer. It describes a child's fear of the unchangeable nature

of the world outside of their rose-colored room. It's themes like these that make the show so universal in its teachings (with a few exceptions aimed at its female audience).

Not only that, but there are also ideals on the effects of influence on a generation through parenting. When Applebloom takes Zecora's side, her older sister commands her to stop thinking in such a non-traditional way. That obviously doesn't work, but the fact that the writers included an exchange of dialogue to illustrate a point is admirable, if not very intellectual on their part.







## TARGET AUDIENCE & CONCLUSION

The target audience of the series has expanded exponentially over the course of its thirteen months on the air. Originally, the show was directed at the same audience as the toy line: young females, six to eight years old. But then something incredible happened: creator Lauren Faust's determination to challenge the perception of the "girl's show" changed the series from a harmless time-waster into an Internet phenomenon. Telling the story of how the ponies were introduced to the World Wide Web would make this report even longer, so a condensed version would suit your free time better. Essentially, an extremely critical essay of the series was posted on a popular website called 4Chan.com.

Once users had read the essay, they were curious enough to watch the show, and they loved it. In light of this explosion, Faust and her team have since made numerous pop culture references in the show and marketing. For the second season, Hasbro advertised the show's anticipated return through parodies of two movies not intended for the show's original audience: "Poltergeist" and "Bride's Maids." This is a clear sign that the writers are pushing for a more universally-rounded show, and it's worked out beautifully. The 1.6 million viewers of the show's first month have risen to 4 million by the first season's end.

My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic is the best cartoon to be aired in far too long. With the downfall of the once-mighty Cartoon Network and the slow death of Nickelodeon, it's nice to see that there's at least one show that dares to be more than just for kids. The reason that young adults enjoy the show is not because of its

nonsensical humor like "Spongebob Squarepants" or because of its subtle mature humor like "Animaniacs"; it's because it's a well-written and enjoyable cartoon. The plots involve much more than teaching the rudiments of good behavior and the humor can be enjoyed by anyone who tunes in.

If not for the exceptionally cheesy recaps and musical numbers, it would be as good as the shows aired during Cartoon Network's Golden Age (1999-2004). It's good for kids, and it's entertaining for parents. Its morals are usually allegorical, which gets the parents learning as much as the kids, it's highly recommended.

The biggest obstacle the series must face is how it's judged from the outside. Just as the episode demonstrates, it's wrong to judge something from the surface, and the show is the best example of this timeless rule. The same problem occurred with "The Powerpuff Girls," another show Mrs. Faust was heavily involved in (and is married to that series' creator, Craig McCracken), but at least those girls were superheroes.

In order to truly enjoy the series as an adult, it is mandatory to destroy all preconceived notions and expectations and take the show for what it is. The series has the potential to become one of the best of all time, and while it has a long way to go, the growing fan base will keep it around for years to come. The best way to describe how to approach this series is to quote C.S. Lewis: "When I became a man I put away childish things, including the fear of childishness and the desire to be very grown up." 🐾









# THE 84<sup>TH</sup> ACADEMY AWARDS®

by g1 MadHero15

It's that time of the year again. The time where Hollywood licks its own boots and gives itself a reassuring pat on the back that it has completed another great year in movie making. Like last year, I'll be looking at the nominees, say who's going to win and why, but also who I personally want to win. I won't be talking about snubs (trust me, there are a lot) or about how the show itself will be. This is purely about the nominated, and their chances. Let's roll out.

Just a quick reminder. I'm doing 14 of the 24 categories. All of the important tones, and the ones that I personally care about. You won't find Editing, Cinematography, or Sound Mixing. Here. With that out of the way, let's get this started.



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## Music (Original Song)

# "Man or Muppet" from "The Muppets" "Real in Rio" from "Rio"

Yep, apparently songs in film sucked so much that the Academy decided to give 2 nominees for Best Song. Like I said, I won't be talking about snubs, but you could get so many other songs. Where's the incredibly happy Life's a Happy Song? The gospel of the Living Proof, where's the cheesy patriotism of Star Spangled Man with a Plan? Seriously Academy, only 2 nominees is bullshit.

But I digress. In any case, there's no doubt that Man or Muppet will be taking home the crown, which it deserves, since Bret McKenzie wrote awesome songs and the Muppet soundtrack was one of the best there was this year. There you have it, my first prediction.

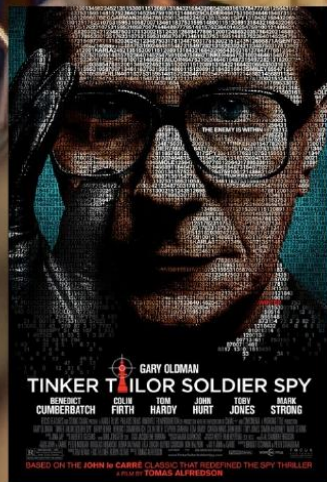
Not exactly the greatest start.

Going to Win:

The Artist

Want to Win:

Tintin







Going to Win:  
Man or Muppet

Want to Win:  
Man or Mupper

## Music (Original Score)

"The Adventures of Tintin" - John Williams

"The Artist" - Ludovic Bource

"Hugo" - Howard Shore

"Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy" - Alberto Iglesias

"War Horse" - John Williams

Well ain't that a whole lot better. 5 actual solid contenders, all with a very different kind of soundtrack.

John Williams makes it here twice thanks to both Tintin and War Horse. While both are by the same composer, they have very different tones. Tintin's is more lighthearted and adventuresque (is that even a word), while War Horse's soundtrack feels very grand and epic. Both don't have a as memorable tune that ET or Jurassic Park created, but they definitely stand out.

Since The Artist is a silent movie, score is very important to capture the tone that it can't do with words. It mostly succeeds with this, with a very lighthearted and bouncy rhythm that easily makes it fit into the 1920's era that it is replicating. Hugo carries the well-established sweeping soundtrack, with a hin-

ge of French due to the setting. It works for the film, and while I don't think it's the greatest score there is, it carries the film well enough, and one or two tunes may cross your mind every now and then. TTSS' soundtrack is really good, carrying a somber tone that fits the movie really well. In a movie dripped with atmosphere, the score certainly sets the tone.

My personal favorite out of this list is easily Tintin, which I thought had another great score by the great John Williams, and really adds to the spectacle. That said, it's not going to win. The Artist is a film that absolutely NEEDS its soundtrack, and I think the Academy admires that more than just another good soundtrack by the greatest composer of our time. I can easily see why, but I still like Tintin a Little bit more (and yes, that probably has somewhat to do with the fact that I'm a Tintin fan boy, sue me).





Considering that all of these movies except Hugo are blockbusters that made tons of money, I can assume that most of you guys have seen these movies. Therefore an explanation about these films will largely be unnecessary.

What falls out for me? I think both Harry Potter, Hugo, and Transformers are out of the race. Not because their effects are bad, far from it, but those 3 had the most obvious effects. You knew that a computer was at work creating those images, and with that in mind, the effects carry a lot less impact. Which just leaves Rise of the Planet of the Apes and Real Steel. With both those films, I thought the effects were amazing. While you won't mistake them for the real thing, the apes in Rise look a whole lot better than they did in the original Planet of the Apes, and with Real Steel, I had a feeling those robots were actually there. A lot of that is probably because of animatronics, but even during the fight scenes, it looked like they were real, something I never felt during any of the Transformers films.

That said, Real Steel does suffer from being a not all too great film (it's not bad, just kind of cheesy and formulaic), and that affects its chances, even for Best Visual Effects.

Therefore, I think the award will go to Rise, which was not only a great flick, but also showed once again how incredible Weta Digital is with effects. If Rise wins, I'll be a very happy guy (though it will not change the fact that Andy Serkis should've been nominated for Best Actor).

## Going to Win:

Rise of the Planet of the Apes

## Want to Win:

Rise of the Planet of the Apes

## Visual Effects

"Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 2"

"Hugo"

"Real Steel"

"Rise of the Planet of the Apes"

"Transformers: Dark of the Moon"







# Foreign Language Film

"Bullhead" - Belgium

"Footnote" - Israel

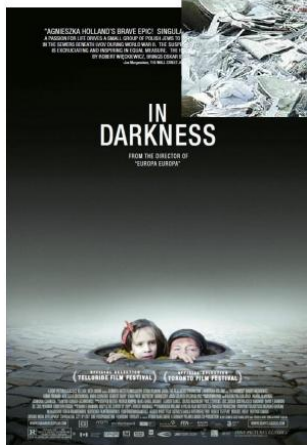
"In Darkness" - Poland

"Monsieur Lazhar" - Canada

"A Separation" - Iran



EEN SCHOT IN DE HOOS OUTSTANDING IN THEATRE UN CHEF D'ŒUVRE ABSOLU



People often wonder why I bother with this category. While I haven't watched any of the movies that are nominated (the foreign language films I did watch didn't get nominated), I do these because I see ScrewAttack as an international community full of video game and movie lovers, and I'd like to show my support to their countries.

I don't know if we have Belgian or Iranian g1's (I doubt the latter), but I'd like to thank Burf12345 and EliteKill's film industry for Footnote, TehTommy's film industry for In Darkness, and the most likely massive amounts of Canadian g1's film industry for Monsieur Lazhar.

Too bad that none of those 3 are going to win it though, because A Separation has been winning Foreign Language Awards left and right. While there may be some voters who think other movies are better, or simply have something against Iran, something really weird has to happen if A Separation were to lose. Since I haven't seen any of the films, I don't think I can really choose who I want to win, though I'm tempted to go for Bullhead to show support to my Flemish neighbors (plus, apparently it has a Dutch main character, which is always a plus for me).

## Going to Win:

A Separation

## Want to Win:

Bullhead  
(for the childish reason I just mentioned)





I promised you guys I wouldn't bitch about the lack of nominees, but I can't help it here. A 2011 list for Best Documentary that doesn't contain Project Nim, Senna, or even Cave of Forgotten Dreams is not dumb, it's downright despicable. I guess they tried to make this category more interesting and harder to guess?, but seriously Academy, what the hell were you thinking.

So what are the nominees about? Well, one I don't know, the other is about the Earth Liberation Front (you may have heard from its Animal counterpart in the second Pokemon episode of Game Theory), the other is the third part of a doc about the West Memphis Murders, a ballet dancer (and its in 3DDDDDDDD!!!!!!), and the last one is about a college football team which apparently really kicked ass at some point

Who's going to win out of this category. I've got no freaking clue, but the Academy does like environmentalism, which may give If a Tree Falls somewhat of an edge. I can't really judge here, I haven't seen any of these films, and therefore have no personal favorite, or any idea that's going to win. This is all just pure guess work

## Going to Win:

If a Tree Falls

## Want to Win:

Project Nim

(yeah I know, not nominated, but still).

# Documentary (Feature)

"Hell and Back Again"

"If a Tree Falls: A Story of the Earth Liberation Front"

"Paradise Lost 3: Purgatory"

"Pina"

"Undefeated"



IF A TREE FALLS

A STORY OF THE EARTH LIBERATION FRONT



PARADISE LOST 3: PURGATORY

INSIDE STORY OF THE WEST MEMPHIS THREE



UNDEFEATED

A FILM BY DAN LUNDAKE & TIM MARTIN

SXSW PREMIERE  
SUNDAY, MARCH 13 9:45PM  
VIMEO THEATER







# Animated Feature Film

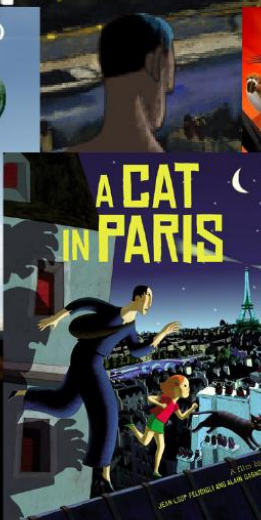
"A Cat in Paris"

"Chico & Rita"

"Kung Fu Panda 2"

"Puss in Boots"

"Rango"



Going to Win

Rango

Want to Win

Rango

Well it seems Pixar's evil reign of terror is officially over, at least for now. With Cars 2 not really all that good (especially by Pixar standards), they didn't even get nominated, thereby ending a 4 year long winning streak

with started with Ratatouille and ends with Toy Story 3. The nominees have certainly been strange, at least 2 of them. Before the announcement, I think no one had heard of either A Cat in Paris (which

as of writing doesn't even have a Wikipedia page), or Chico and Rita (which is apparently a really good film, but I haven't seen it). Both seem to have taken the role that The Illusionist had last year, only even more obscure.

They both most likely will not win, due to their obscurity, but it's still nice of the Academy to give them some kind of attention. Then we have the 2 DreamWorks films, and the Little animated movie that could. I happen to think that the first Kung Fu Panda wasn't as great as many other people thought, and the sequel continued my belief that the series is overrated. Doesn't mean it's bad though, the fight scenes are really cool, and the plotline about kung fu dying thanks to modern technology such as gunpowder is actually pretty clever. Still, I'm not all too excited about Kung Fu Panda 2.

Then there's Puss in Boots, which is a prequel to the Shrek movies and shows us our furry friend before Shrek 2. I liked it better than Kung Fu Panda 2, and the sheer amount of fun that the cast seems to be having is projected to the audience. Still, it suffers from a rather poor third act, which could hurt its chances.

Last there's Rango, a movie loved by film-aficionado, not too much the general public. I happen to fall right into the middle. It's probably the most beautiful (though also the ugliest) animated film I've ever seen, and I appreciated the maturity and references to classic westerns, but Rango never really knows what it wants to be, a kids film, or an animated film for film-lovers, and it never really knows how to balance it.

Still, Rango plays a whole lot more to the Academy than most of these films, and since Tintin isn't nominated so that Academy favorite Steven Spielberg won't get it, Rango probably will gain the top spot. Out of the nominees, I pretty much agree with this. The fact that I only liked it and not loved it and yet want it to win probably says something about the pretty terrible year animation had (though I really liked Tintin, but alas, that film wasn't nominated).





# Writing (Adapted Screenplay)

"The Descendants"

"Hugo"

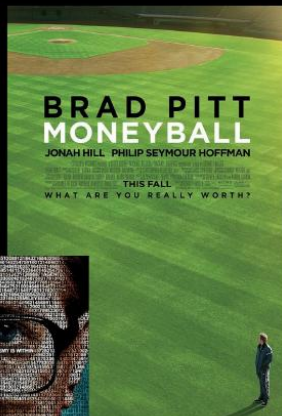
"The Ides of March"

"Moneyball"

"Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy"

Now we're getting to the important stuff. A film is only as good as the script that carries it (though a good director and cast also help). This year had some pretty damn good scripts based on other people's material.

I'm going to keep this one short, since there's another category just like it coming up really soon, but Moneyball seems to be the winner. When you have a script that is co-written by both Aaron Sorkin and Steve Zallian, you know that you're getting a good script. While its chances could be hurt by the fact that Aaron Sorkin won this exact award last year thanks to The Social Network, that matters a lot less in screenwriting, and it would be a shame if it lost, though The Descendants is a pretty close second. Still, Moneyball made baseball statistics interesting. Tell me another script that can do that



Going to Win:

Moneyball

Want to Win:

Moneyball



# Writing (Original Screenplay)

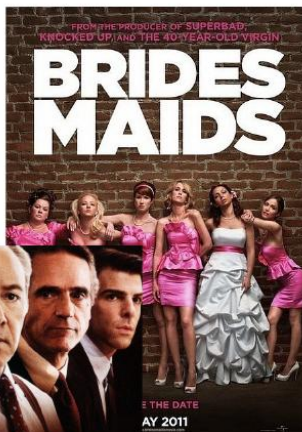
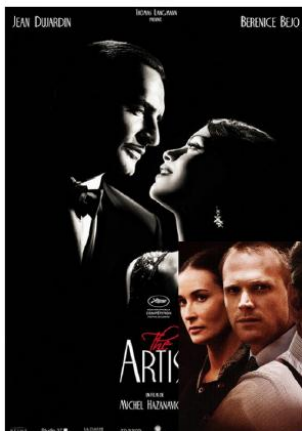
"The Artist" Written by Michel Hazanavicius

"Bridesmaids" Written by Annie Mumolo & Kristen Wiig

"Margin Call" Written by J.C. Chandor

"Midnight in Paris" Written by Woody Allen

"A Separation" Written by Asghar Farhadi



Unlike the Adapted Screenplay, the Original Screenplay seems to be a lot harder to figure out the winner, as all of them have at least some chance of winning.

Like many of you, I'm confused why The Artist is on there. Considering not a word is spoken in that film, I continue to find that weird. That most likely hurts its chances, since the Academy seems to prefer a script with memorable dialogue more than just a great story.

A Separation is also out, likely because it carries the stigma of being a Foreign Film, which has much less of a chance than an English spoken film. You can have some of the greatest dialogue in the world. If your dialogue is in Swahili, your chances of Best Screenplay will suffer.

Margin Call is a film that has a good script and the actor to carry it, but lack of other nominations means that its chances of winning are very minimalistic.

Which leaves 2 comedies left, Bridesmaids and Midnight in Paris. It's very hard to decide between those 2. Bridesmaids was the crowd-pleaser of the bunch, with a script that showed that women could not only be crude, but also really funny. Midnight in Paris is another great script by Woody Allen, which showed he's still got it after so many years of writing and movie making.

I think that the vote of the Academy will eventually go to Woody Allen, and though he won't be there to accept his award (too busy working on another film), the Academy will most likely choose him over Kristen Wiig and Annie Mumolo. A shame, yes, and Bridesmaids winning would probably be better, but Woody Allen seems to be the way to go

Going to Win:

Midnight in Paris

Want to Win:

Bridesmaids





The Supporting Actress category always feels like the weakest part in the acting category, as the meatiest roles are given by either men, or the female lead role. This year did bring in some memorable performances from women in a supporting role. It's still not great, but it's something.

Bérénice Bejo has been nominated multiple times for her role as Peppy Miller, a former fan girl who becomes incredibly famous after the switch to talkies is being made in the film industry. It's a role in direct contrast with Jean Dujardin's, and provides some interesting sequences with Dujardin, both before and after her fame. However, while she's been nominated a lot for her role, she hasn't struck bait and won a whole lot. This could be a problem for her, though she's definitely an outsider depending on how popular *The Artist* will be.

Janet McTeer is out of the race. It's a wonder she was even nominated. She's certainly the least known of the 5, and that won't be to her advantage. Add in the fact that Albert Nobbs simply isn't all that great of a film (at least, that's what critics say, I haven't seen *Albert Nobbs*), and you can count her out.

Back in 2010, next to no one knew the name Jessica Chastain. Then all of a sudden, she appeared everywhere. While she's mainly nominated for her role as the bimboish rich outsider in *The Help*, she could easily be nominated for her role in *Tree of Life*, *The Dept*, *Take Shelter*, *Coriolanus*, and more. This Oscar nomination shows just what kind of incredible breakthrough she had. Will she win? She has a shot, but in *The Help*, she's outshined by Octavia Spencer, which means she'll have to seriously campaign to win.

As it stands, it looks to be a 2 horse race between Melissa McCarthy and Octavia Spencer. Very similar but also really different performances. Melissa McCarthy



**Going to Win:**

Octavia Spencer

**Want to Win:**

Melissa McCarthy

## Actress in a Supporting Role

Bérénice Bejo in "*The Artist*"

Jessica Chastain in "*The Help*"

Melissa McCarthy in "*Bridesmaids*"

Janet McTeer in "*Albert Nobbs*"

Octavia Spencer in "*The Help*"

thy was absolutely hilarious in *Bridesmaids*, and carried most of the crude humor that made the film so much fun to watch. Octavia Spencer meanwhile is along with Viola Davis the carrier of the movie, delivering the stand out scene of the film and providing a lot of humor when the film becomes too heavy. So who will win? While it would be great for McCarthy to win, it

seems that Octavia Spencer will win this one. If the character had more dramatic weight to it, the Academy would've been probably given it to McCarthy. But as it stands, Spencer does have that drama. It's been too long since the Academy has given a Oscar for a strictly comedic role, but it seems we'll have to wait a little longer before that ever happens again.





What an odd list of contenders. First you have your classic Shakespearean actor, then we get the fat kid from *Superbad*, a crazy old man who's long since past his prime, and 2 very respected old people in the twilight of their careers. Pretty weird list if I so myself. Kenneth Branagh gets to play the person he's long been compared with: Laurence Olivier. He's defini-

tely the most comedic character in the film, continuously getting frustrated at Marilyn Monroe's incredibly high demands and her method acting. It's nice that he's nominated, but he probably won't win. Like Bernice Bejo, he's been nominated, but actually winning has been the problem. The same problem is apparent with Jonah Hill in *Moneyball*. Playing the ner-

dy grad student who helps Brad Pitt change the way of baseball, Jonah Hill definitely shows more of his acting chops than when he does something like *The Sitter* or Allen Gregory. As I said before, he's been nominated a few times, just hasn't won anything. It would be hilarious to see something like *21 Jump Street* saying Academy Award Winner Jonah Hill though.

Then we have Max von Sydow, who plays the silent old man who only communicates using yes and no tattooed on his hands (you gaming nerds might know him as the voice of Esbern in *Skyrim*). The acclaimed Swedish actor is very sentimental and very good as the aforementioned old man who may or may not be the main character's grandfather, but *EL&IC* is despite its Best Picture nomination a too big of a mess to give him a serious shot.

Though we're all sad that Andy Serkis or Albert Brooks (but mostly Andy Serkis) didn't make it in, I'm very glad to see Nick Nolte in the nominations list. He's devastating as a man whose been through some really bad times and now has to deal with his 2 MMA Fighting sons, who have long since abandoned him as their father. While the performance is great, the problem is that *Warrior* bombed big time at the box office, meaning that Nolte would have to campaign big time to win, and even then he faces one big problem

That problem being Christopher Plummer. Plummer is great as a man with terminal cancer who finds out he's gay after his wife of 60 years passes away. Its weird, quirky, and Plummer rolls with it, being really sentimental and simply a joy to watch. Despite *Beginners* not doing great box office numbers (it's an indie film after all), Plummer has been picking up a lot of steam, and the award would be the crowning jewel in what is an incredible career.

Going to Win:

Christopher Plummer

Want to Win:

Christopher Plummer

## Actor in a Supporting Role

Kenneth Branagh in "My Week with Marilyn"

Jonah Hill in "Moneyball"

Nick Nolte in "Warrior"

Christopher Plummer in "Beginners"

Max von Sydow in "Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close"





This is easily the toughest category right now, with at least 3 absolutely great performances all deserving of a win. Which of these women will eventually take home the gold. One of those women will most likely not get it is Glenn Close. Albert Nobbs was a passion project of hers that she has tried to get off the ground for a very long time, and while she certainly tries her best as a woman forced to disguise herself as a man for over 30 years, the movie around her is apparently a clunky mess which never comes together, and while her performance is strong, she won't win.

This is also the problem with Meryl Streep in *The Iron Lady*. It's no secret that the Academy loves Streep, and she's almost perfect in impersonating the extremely controversial British politician Margaret Thatcher.

The problem is however that the movie around her isn't great, suffering from taking a neutral stance at a figure at who it was impossible to be neutral at, and it feels more like a Greatest Moments type of biopic rather than a true look at the woman. While Streep still has a big shot winning (like she always does), I predict she'll have to go empty handed for the 15th time

When your other roles include a 5 minute part in *Social Network* and the lead in the *Nightmare on Elm Street* remake, people don't expect you to come far, so said people were very surprised to see Rooney Mara become the titular Girl with the Dragon Tattoo in the David Fincher remake. Despite this, she shows just how much talent she has, providing a different Lisbeth than the Noomi Rapace version brought us. She shows a lot of fearlessness and I found her to be incredible. However, she's still young (25), and with a career that will include a Terence Malick film, she'll be nominated for another film pretty soon, and I think that the Academy might

want to wait for her career to grow before giving her a Oscar.

Meanwhile, it seems that Michelle Williams is looking for an Oscar as well, this time playing one of the most famous women the world has ever known. She portrays both the bubbly bombshell part of Marilyn, and the mentally crushed, drug addicted part of Marilyn really well. Like Rooney Mara, she's still Young (30), and already has 3 nominations under her belt. The Academy will most likely wait to give her Oscar. Sorry Michelle, even playing an icon doesn't seem to help you win a Oscar. Finally there's Viola Davis, who provides a lot of the heart and soul of the film. She's considered

the frontrunner as the black maid who's been through very hard times, dealing with racism and seeing the kids she helped raise become the monsters their parents are. It's a performance that has been seen, but she does her best and it helps the movie a lot.

I don't think that the Academy will pull in a surprise and give the award to Viola Davis. Her strong performance helped *The Help* from being just another movie about racism to become a lot more. I think she deserves it, though I feel that Rooney Mara with her sheer fearlessness deserves it more. Like I said, this is a very tough category, and I could easily be wrong.

Going to Win:

Viola Davis

Want to Win:

Rooney Mara

## Actress in a Leading Role

Glenn Close in "Albert Nobbs"

Viola Davis in "The Help"

Rooney Mara in

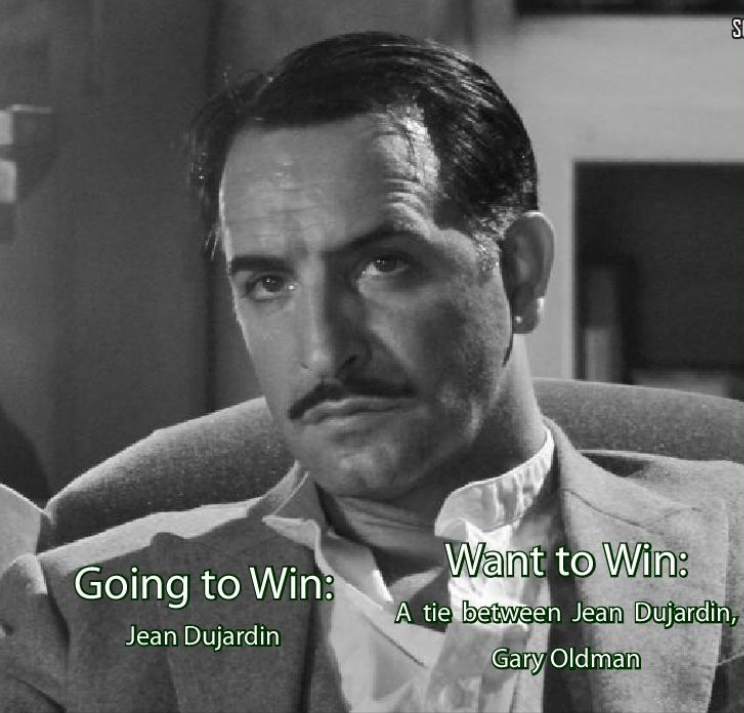
"The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo"

Meryl Streep in "The Iron Lady"

Michelle Williams in "My Week with Marilyn"







**Going to Win:**

Jean Dujardin

**Want to Win:**

A tie between Jean Dujardin,

Gary Oldman

## Actor in a Leading Role

**Demián Bichir in "A Better Life"**

**George Clooney in "The Descendants"**

**Jean Dujardin in "The Artist"**

**Gary Oldman in "Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy"**

**Brad Pitt in "Moneyball"**

While not as tough as the Best Actress category, the Best Actor category is also quite the battlefield, featuring 2 foreigners, 2 of the biggest actors of our generations, and a great actor FINALLY getting the recognition he deserves.

Let's talk about Demian Bichir first, since he's the oddball in this list, and since he beat Micheal Fassbender in Shame despite not many people knowing about this actor of his film. In the film, he

plays a illegal immigrant, trying to establish a better life for his teenage son, who isn't helping out thanks to being part of gangs, and acting like a dick around his dad. It's a great performance, but one overshadowed by the big boys, leaving him out of the race.

Then we have Brad Pitt in Moneyball, playing Billy Beane, the sports director of the Oakland Athletics who with Jonah Hill changes the world of baseball, and also

tries to bond with his daughter. It's a very good performance by an extremely great actor, but like Bichir, he's overshadowed by the other nominees, leaving him with a third nomination but no win.

Then we have the other surprise of the group, Gary Oldman. While continuously praised for his performance as George Smiley, he was only getting awarded by the British Press, not so much the American. Until now, as he is nominated for an Oscar for the very first time. Unfortunately, that first nomination isn't going to translate into a win. He's a dangerous outsider, but it seems to be a 2-horse race.

That horse race being against George Clooney for The Descendants and Jean Dujardin in the Artist. This is extremely tough, as both actors deliver incredible performances. George Clooney is great as a man who's down to his luck, despite living in what's essentially paradise, while Dujardin is very expressive as a superstar who loses it all because he doesn't want to adapt to the talkies. Both are very different performances, and it's going to be hard to choose between them.

I'm going on a limp here and say Dujardin will eventually be the winner. Silent acting is hard, but Dujardin absolutely nails it thanks to his incredibly expressive face. Clooney meanwhile, has the disadvantage of having already won before (for Best Supporting Actor in Syriana), which decreases his chance. I think Dujardin also deserves it more, along with Gary Oldman, simply because of the incredible career he's had so far.





This is easily the most open Best Director in a long time. No longer does the Best Picture winner seem to be the automatic Best Picture winner, and every one of these seems to have somewhat of a chance. Well.... Sort of.

2 can be removed for the same reason, and that's Terrence Malick and Woody Allen. Not because of their work is inferior from the other guys, far from it. The reason is because they most likely won't show up at all. Woody Allen will be too busy making another movie, and Malick simply doesn't show up to Award Shows (to demonstrate how often he doesn't appear, they still use the picture they used when he was nominated for Thin Red Line back in 1997). And the Academy does like to hear speeches from the directors, meaning both of them are both for a fairly unfair reason.

So then we have the other 3, and out of those, Martin Scorsese will most likely be out. While only having won once, despite an incredible career, I think that the Academy will give it to a new person. Sorry Marty, at least you got the Golden Globe.

Which leaves just the last 2, Alexander Payne for The Descendants, and Michael Hazanavicius for The Artist. This is an incredible tough choice. Payne has more experience, and has seen plenty of awards love for his films like Sideways, About Schmidt, and Election. Micheal (no, I'm not going to continuously type that hard last name) meanwhile, was previously best known for the spy spoof series OSS 117.

And that's where I think the choice will be made. While Michael has made quite the splash, I think they want to avoid the Tom Hooper scenario last year. Payne has continuously showed good work, and I think that this Oscar would be the crowning achievement to his career.

## Directing

"The Artist" - Michel Hazanavicius

"The Descendants" - Alexander Payne

"Hugo" - Martin Scorsese

"Midnight in Paris" - Woody Allen

"The Tree of Life" - Terrence Malick



Going to Win:

Alexander Payne

Want to Win:

Alexander Payne





## Best Picture

"The Artist"

"Hugo"

"The Descendants"

"Midnight in Paris"

"Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close"

"Moneyball"

"The Help"

"The Tree of Life"

"Hugo"

"War Horse"

And here we have it. The creme de la creme. The 9 movies that get to duke it out to decide who was the Best Picture. Who will go home with one of the most prestigious award in film, and which films will bite the dust early on.

If you told me that *Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close* would be nominated for Best Picture, I would've believed you. Directed by Stephen Daldry (Billy Elliot, The Hours), starring 2 Oscar winners and a bunch of other acclaimed actors, and based on a critically acclaimed book. It should've been a shoe in.

And then the movie came out, and the result was a film people were very mixed about. They said that the story was not very good, the kid too unnecessarily quirky, and using 9/11 in a bad way. Now it is a miracle that this film got nominated. That miracle won't translate into a win however, though it can certainly try.

Then there's *The Help*, a movie that critics only really liked, and audiences absolutely adored, easily the highest grossing film on this list. That said, I feel it has taken on the role that *The Blind Side* had 2 years ago, as in it was a movie that audiences loved, but the critics thought it was simply ok. With that in mind, the chance of *The Help* winning are incredibly low, and it will have to do with its 2 actress wins.

*War Horse* also doesn't have that big of a shot. While the Academy adores Steven Spielberg (which was probably the reason *War Horse* even got the nomination in the first place), and they love old school filmmaking, *War Horse* suffers from its own earnestness. Some find it great, others found it sappy and even hokey, and that mixed view may be its ultimate downfall.

Gaining mixed reception has also been the problem for *The Tree of Life*. Despite winning at Cannes (being the first American to do so in a long time), it has lost not only a lot of steam since then, but also suffered from its own artiness. Some found *Tree of Life* to be an incredible experience (such as our own *Game Overthinker*, who named it his best movie of the year), others meanwhile found it incredibly pretentious and too stuck up its own ass.

There's no middle ground, and while the majority really loves it, the ones who hate it are a very loud minority. That and the previously mentioned lack of steam seem to have killed *Tree of Life*'s chances.

In the woodchopper you go, Since *Tree of Life* stars Brad Pitt, let's now also talk about the other Best Picture he's in: *Moneyball*. When *Moneyball* was released in October, audiences and critics really liked it, and seemed to ready to

take the Academy by storm. Well, not so much. Since its release, *Moneyball* lost a lot of steam thanks to the uprising of other awards contenders. While it's a great film, its lack of momentum has been very troubling, and a Social Network style uprising doesn't seem to be happening. Sorry *Moneyball*, 3 strikes, you're out.

Another movie that lost its chances seem to be *Midnight in Paris*. Woody Allen is a director cursed with the stigma that his new work will always be compared to his old work. The old-fashioned Academy agree that MiP is one of Allen's best films in a really long time, but is it on the same level as *Annie Hall*? *Manhattan*? *Purple Rose of Cairo*? Most of the Academy will most likely say no, as they're stuck in the past.

Finally we have the final 3. 2 of them celebrate the art of movie making, the other one is just a damn good film. Which film will rise to the top and grab that prestigious prize. Will it be *Hugo*? The huge flop that celebrates the very birth of cinema. Will it be *The Artist*, and its tribute to the silent movies that the Academy loves to remember. Or will it be *The Descendants*, a movie that once again shows how good of an actor Clooney is and what a great director Payne is.

I think the Academy will go for the obvious and pick *The Artist* as Best Picture. More so than any other film, they've fallen absolutely in love with it, and ever since it arrived, it hasn't lost speed and the affection has continued to spread.

While *The Descendants* has lost its steam (not much, but definitely some), and *Hugo* being an expensive flop (150 million budget, only 80 million back, and yes, box office does matter to a certain degree), *The Artist* has the best papers to go home with the award. It's silent, its black and white, its French, and soon, it'll most likely be Best Picture. ☐







# PLAYSTATION VITA PREVIEW

by gi MadHero15

**A new console release is always exciting, and the amount that can be said can't fit on 1 measly magazine page. Therefore, instead of a regular preview, we're going to dig deep in what the Vita can do, if it can succeed, and what my overall thoughts are. Let's see just what the Vita has to offer.**

## What is it?

For those that have been living under a rock, the Vita is the successor of the Playstation Portable, aka the PSP. It's a handheld device that will challenge the 3DS to handheld dominance.

## How powerful is it?

Very. I won't bother talking about the specs and processing power the thing has, but I can tell that the Vita's games look amazing. Uncharted Golden Abyss looks like it was made for the PS3, all of that in the palm of your hand. That's just the start of it all. Who knows how beautiful the games look 2 years from now.

## Can I play my PSP games on it?

This hasn't been explained very well. While the discs you have are now useless because the Vita doesn't have that type of slot. However, you can download PSP games directly from the Playstation Store on PSN. Whether that means you have to repay money to get your games on your Vita you already own isn't very clear. If so, that would be quite a dick move.

## What makes it different from the PSP?

Aside from the improved graphics, a lot more has been added. A second analogue stick so that you

finally control the camera well. The game also features an extremely gimmicky front AND back touch screen, and also a camera so that you can take pictures. There's also the ability to go on the internet if you're willing enough to buy the 3G model.

## What games will there be?

If the Vita is going to fail, it's not going to be because of the games. Obviously looking at how the 3DS did when it came out, Sony doesn't want such a start and will go full force. Some of the launch titles include Uncharted, Rayman Origins, Marvel vs Capcom 3, Fifa, Katamari, and Blazblue. Not only that, but games in the pipeline include series such as Call of Duty,







LittleBigPlanet, Ridge Racer, and even a Bioshock. That's really impressive.

### **Awesome! How much to get one?**

That's where we hit a bump in the road. The initially alright sounding \$250 is for the non-3G version, the version you most likely don't want. The 3G version is \$300. Already expensive, but it gets worse. The Vita has exclusive memory cards, which cost about 20-100 dollars. Say you want a 16 GB memory card, those 60 bucks. Then there are the games, which are reasonably priced at 40-50 dollars. Overall, you're looking at a \$400 investment. That's quite a lot, and might scare some people away.

### **Well, what's your opinion about it?**

I don't think I've made it much of a secret that I'm a Nintendo fanboy. I see Sony as the main competitor, and while I've played and liked certain Sony consoles, I've never bought them. However, I know where to draw the line and be

fair. I've given plenty of exclusive Sony games high Hype Levels despite my animosity towards them, because I want to be as fair as possible.

With that out of the way, I think that the Vita has a lot of potential. It's a really powerful device with some great support from other companies. If we already get such quality games when the system launches, who know what we'll get later on. Like I said, tons of potential.

However, I have the nagging feeling that the Vita isn't going to do well, at all. Maybe it could've done well a few years back, but the problem lies in the advent of the smartphone era.

Tons of people are content with Angry Birds and Cut the Rope, and don't need huge blockbusters like Uncharted on the go. It will never be able to replicate that kind of experience (it would need actual buttons for that), but the people are content with it. Also, I don't think that Sony gets what handhelds are all about: smaller bite-sized experiences that you

play on the go. It kind of comes back to Craig's criticism of Ocarina of Time 3D, where he said it didn't feel right on a handheld. Sony seems to think bigger is better, and pretty much made a Playstation 3 which you can take with you. But if I want to play PS3 games, I'd get a PS3.

Plus, the thing is way too expensive. When the price was revealed at E3, I reacted in shock because I thought it was pretty reasonable, but the more I looked at it, and after the 3DS faltered with that exact price, I can't see the Vita make a difference.

Add in ridiculously expensive memory cards and the Vita is looking like a very expensive joke.

I want to give a benefit of a doubt, but the numbers from Japan are not helping.

The country that absolutely loved the PSP can't seem to reflect that love on the Vita. If the numbers are that bad in Japan, wait until you see the numbers of the countries who weren't enamored by the PSP (like the US for example).

Overall, I can't see myself get all that excited for the Vita. It has huge potential, but Sony really doesn't seem to get the handheld market. I hope it succeeds, Nintendo can't be allowed to have no competitors whatsoever, but in this day and age, the Vita could very well be doomed, and Sony needs to really make sure that this won't be their Virtual Boy. Good luck Sony, good luck.

### **Thumbs Up/Down**

Thumbs Up for the huge potential it has, but Thumbs Down for the price, shitty battery life, and just overall feeling. ■













## Why Fi is...who she is

by gl JETZ.acx

While I'll try my very best to evade as many spoilers in this blog entry, a fair warning: it's highly recommended that you've played Skyward Sword before reading it. Also, I'll disregard any spoiler warnings needed for older entries. Your loss – it's not my fault if you never played Wind Waker or Twilight Princess. Got it? Good.

It's no secret – I'm not even trying to hide it. For me Fi is, to put it in a non-insulting term, extremely talkative. Too much in fact, that a big part of Skyward Sword's charm and appeal has been ruined by her constant necessity of chiming in to tell me what lies ahead. Unlike other entries in the Zelda series where companions played a big role in your adventure, Fi lacked something that others had whenever they

needed to remind you of something. Hey, Navi sure was annoying as hell and I still want her to STFU, but anything she said in Ocarina of Time pales in comparison with what Fi did in Skyward Sword.

Everything in the game, no matter how obvious it might look to you, has to be reminded by this statistically minded spirit.

The best example – and the one part where she simply jumps the shark – is during the fourth dungeon, where you find a boss key chest far away from you. The game does a pretty good job panning off to show you that chest as a manner of telling you "this is where you are, and here's the chest you need to reach"...and just seconds after it...





## No fuckin' shit

You could see my face of disbelief when she said those words. It's the fourth dungeon – it's supposed to be the second half, maybe third, of the game, where I'm supposed to figure things out all by myself. Yet its things like these that make me double-check my age to make sure, if I didn't flip the numbers around.

Skyward Sword's controls are impeccable and the story is just one epic tale, but it's Fi's constant urge to tell you what's ahead, from the beginning to end of your journey, which just simply ruins the wonder of exploration and discovery that I once had from past game journeys. It's almost as if Nintendo made Fi as some sort of baby sitter who constantly told me what's the next thing I need to



do, without letting my precious little mind figure it out myself...

Or was...that the plan from the start?

The ending, which (and this isn't exactly much of a spoiler) finds you parting ways to this... interesting companion, made my

mind whirl a bit. What if – and this is just a what if – what if Fi did all this not because she was told to, or was programmed to do it from the start?

What if...she did it out of impulse, like all of this was just part of her unique personality, robotic as it may be? You may be surprised.

## COMPANIONS IN ZELDA SERIES

Let's just get this out of the way: companions stating the obvious are nothing new, as any seasoned Zelda fan can tell you. Anyone who played Ocarina of Time can easily relate to the constant times Navi stopped you in your tracks just to tell you something that you saw with your own eyes. Best example? Forest Temple. The first time you see that twisted corridor...

However, you can see how this irritates less than Fi's, since she simply says it bluntly and without too much wording. She's stating the obvious, but it's short enough that you can just press A and go on with your adventure. Later ahead, she warns you of "shadows" inside of certain rooms – hence implying the presence of Wallmasters. To be completely honest, it's a godsend seeing as these creepy hands are scarier when you encounter them without any warning.

Tatl on the other hand was actually a step up in the right direction – she kept some of the old antics

from her older counterpart but removed some of the more annoying ones like reminding you of the current mission (at least after the first time loop) and having a simple-minded personality (something Tatl didn't have since she had a background of her own). Since Majora's Mask relied heavily on the 3-day cycle, the constant

feeling of completing your goal ASAP, while present, was never hampered by a fairy calling you out every ten minutes because you don't want to lose focus of what you're doing at the moment.

Wind Waker handled the companionship formula rather nicely this time around. Unlike the N64 titles where you would get your info from a fairy, you had two



▶ See where this is heading?



main companions this time around: Tetra, who would chime in from time to time in the first parts of your adventure, and the King of Red Lions who would replace her duties. Usually you don't need their advice, and they only chime in when it's necessary. The Temple of the Gods, for example, have the interesting mechanic of controlling your statues, but at some point you'll have to leave them behind, so your trusty talking boat would chime in and tell you to relax and leave it behind, because it will wait for you once you're done.

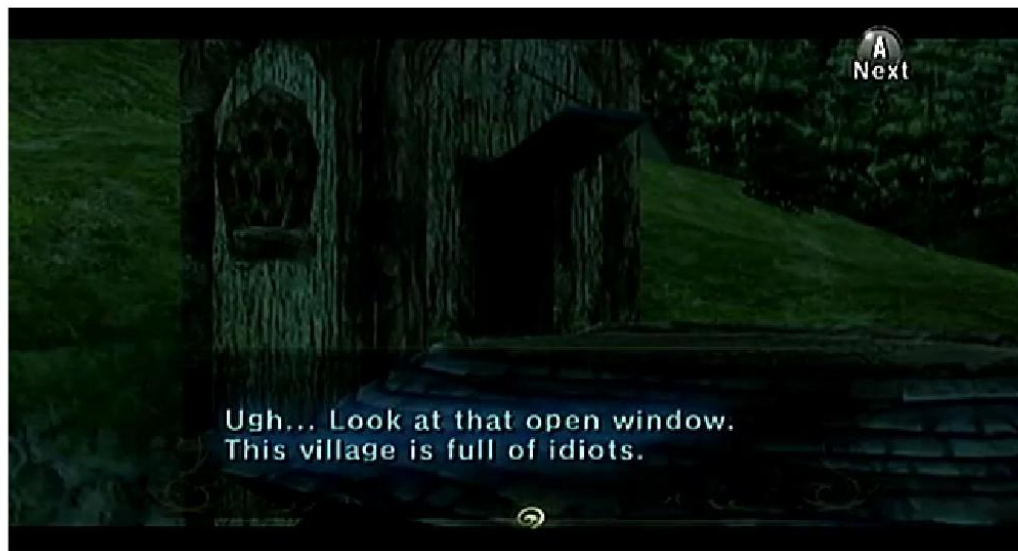
However, if you missed the old "ZOMG state the obvious" companionship of old, you could get it by using the Tingle Tuner. Yeah, it means dealing with one of the most controversial characters in the Zelda series, but he's very useful in so many ways. For one, you can move his cursor anywhere and check certain important marks that could be important for your adventure, plus you can also use a few tools that he has in his repertoire, like Tingle Bombs and instant access to potions and All-purpose bait. True, it means the need to get an extra GBA with a GameCube link cable, but it's still handy nonetheless.

Ezlo is just a fun companion. He's the best example of HOW you make a "state the obvious" companion, something that Nintendo took note when designing Midna for Twilight Princess. The key here is simple: integrate the companion's personality into the hint itself. How many times have you found yourself pressing Select just to see what Ezlo has to say next? Midna also had some of these qualities, and whenever the camera panned out to show you a hint, if Midna would pop out to talk to you, she would tell you

▼ Tingle may be extremely annoying, but his Tingle Tuner was still a great item in my opinion.



in an ambiguous yet interesting manner, full of her own personality. My favorite example of how she handled the hinting system comes right around the time you are sneaking in Ordon Village to get a sword and shield. This scene pretty much exemplifies Midna:





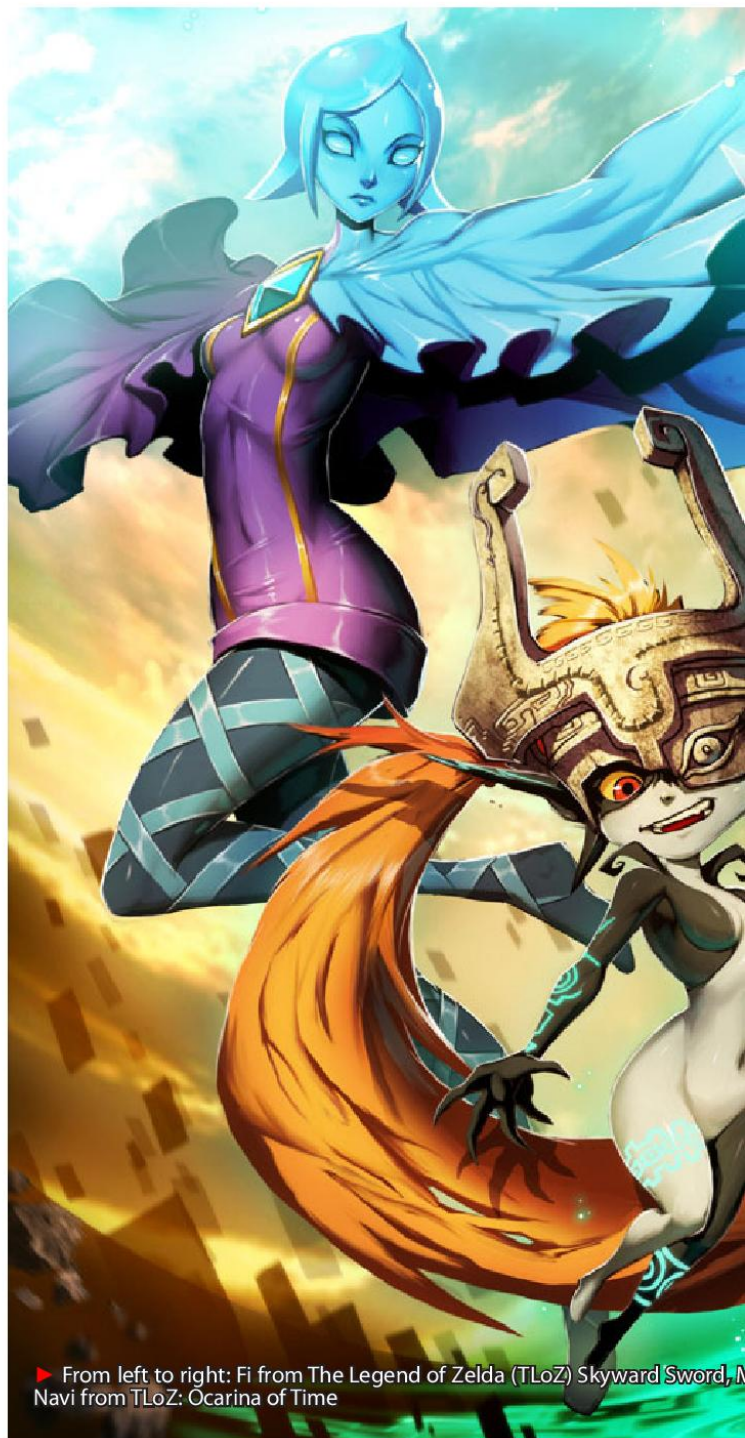


## WHO IS FI, ANYWAY?

Throughout each entry of the Zelda series, we've seen how companions grew from being more than simply giving you guidance. Tat! is the sister of Tael, both friends of the now-antagonist, the Majora's Mask-wearing Skull Kid; the King of Red Lions is in truth the King of Hyrule; Ezlo is a Minish turned into a hat by the evil Vaati; and Midna...well, this one I'll reserve it, but suffice to say she's more than what she apparently looks. Even Ciela and Zelda (from Spirit Tracks) were pretty interesting characters – the former actually aided by the also awesomeriffic Linebeck.

But...who is Fi? Well, this is where Skyward Sword missed the ball. At the very least, the other companions in the series made a delicate attempt to bring an interesting back-story without overshadowing the main plot (although an exception can be debated when it comes to Midna). Fi, however, establishes what she is from the start...and that's pretty much it. Fi is a spirit created to aid the hero in his journey...the end. What little you learn from her later on is just minimal and you could already guess it miles ahead before officially learning it in the game. So to put it in the most simplistic terms: she's just there to wait for Link to pull out the Goddess Sword and OFF WE GO. Why not explain to me why she's so emotionless and robotic? Why she's constantly reminding me of the stuff I personally see in the game?

Well, if the game won't tell me, then I'll just have to find the answers myself. Let's start from the beginning. Where do we find Fi in the first place? Well, without dragging out and without spoiling the details, you find Fi in Skyloft, who supposedly resides inside the Goddess Sword. Right off the bat, you learn that she was waiting for Link. Not Zelda's daddy, not the flashy knight in the yellow tunic, but you, the day-dreaming



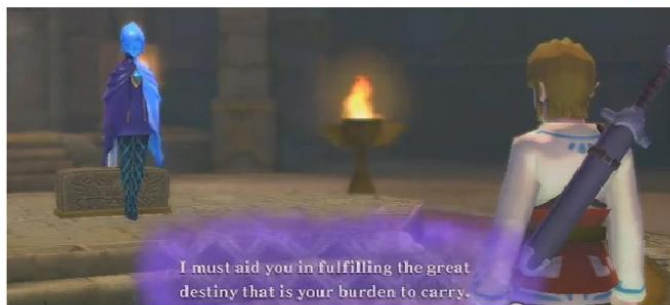
► From left to right: Fi from The Legend of Zelda (TLoZ) Skyward Sword, Navi from TLoZ: Ocarina of Time







Midna from TLoZ: Twilight Princess and



Loftwing amateur who's a natural at flying and has the hottest girl - well, had - in all of Skyloft. She wakes up because it is time for you to set off to a journey destined to happen. Which implies the following: **1)** She lays dormant for years, perhaps centuries, inside the sword, waiting for the chosen one to appear, and **2)** She's been pretty lonely during all these years.

You later learn (quick spoiler alert) that she was sent by the Goddess to aid you in your quest, which means that **3)** She, at the very least, managed to meet someone else other than you. However, she was just given that mission along with all the knowledge she could muster in her head, and then stuffed into the sword to stay dormant. This leads us to **4)** she has little to no actual experience in the outside world. So Fi learns how to speak, what's the mission at task, and has a virtual encyclopedia in her database, but being someone who never practiced any social skills, she would definitely feel pretty emotionless. Which means that **5)** She lacks emotion simply because no one really cared for her in the first place. Okay, the Goddess did care for her; but would you love someone who forces you into random tasks, tasks that you don't even know how to deal with?

This leads us to her statistic-using tendencies. Fi is constantly reminding you of the probabilities based on percentage, never "it's likely" or "I'm pretty sure" or "It's definite". Because no matter how she can ever say such words,

she must be absolutely sure that she's giving the right answer, while giving a percentage of error of whatever she's saying at the moment. Yeah, there are moments where she gives a 100% or a 0%, but the sole fact that she uses those numbers is a fact that she relies on using objectiveness to send her message. Which leads us to **6)** She is unsure of herself. Sounds like I'm over thinking this a bit, but hey, I actually suggested this topic to the Game Overthinker...so why not me in the first place?

Anyway, back to topic. So Fi is already peculiar in nature. How does this explain her annoyingness? Put in her shoes for once. You barely awoke in this new world that, yeah, you know it's there, but all you've got is knowledge - not experience. You know a flower exists, but have you ever seen how it looks like? It's like how a blind man finally achieves his dream to see clearly - to distinguish between red and blue. This overwhelming sense of wonder and discovery makes you want to talk about it to your closest friend, amari? Hence, Fi is such a person, and thus, the most important fact of her personality... **7)** she becomes overwhelmed by the new world in front of her that her only desire is to find someone to vent it out. And who else than with her own master, the one she's tasked to guide in the first place? "Hey, it just so happens that I need to guide this boy to that place that looks so majestic and mysterious... hey Master! There's a temple over there, Zelda might be there!"





So then, she goes on and tells you everything that you and her find during the journey, like a little kid who finds ducks swimming at the park's lake for the first time. Don't lie. You've been there, either as the parent or the child; you've seen those ducks and a shout could be heard all over the area: "LOOK!! DUCKS!!" Fi is such a child. Her memory is a living encyclopedia, but her mind is still that of a 3-year-old; which means that **8)** She states the obvious because she's just a child. But why not do it as Navi? Navi stated the obvious but she was never as talkative as Fi! Going back to her memory, you can expect it to be a living dictionary too, which leads us to **9)** she speaks a lot because she has the tools to do so.

Indeed, Link would be daydreaming after she finishes her long-winded speech, much like most of us with our Wii Remotes. But then comes the sad part of this story – the ending. If you can count this as a spoiler, go ahead and look away. Anyway, Fi leaves you after you finished your task in hand, and Fi reminds him something before leaving him completely.

She indicates that during the time she's been with Link, she began to feel emotion. What? Feeling emotions? So during all this time you've been chiming in, telling me about whatever you saw at my side because you felt some butterflies in your ghostly stomach...okay.

So... **10)** She did all of this because it made her HAPPY. Indeed, all of this makes her a bit more complicated than what most of you expected, right? But that was what my dear imagination started to cook up when I finished Skyward Sword.

I tried to dig into why Nintendo created such a bizarre companion to Link, and how she would compare to the rest of the pack of awesome companions they've released over the years.

► ZOMG IT CAN FLY!! IT CAN FLY!!! IT'S A MIRACLE!!!!



You have acquired a new item.  
Analysis of this object's insect-like profile and wings indicates it can fly.

## Okay, so let's tally up those points to see if I missed anything:

- 1. She was asleep inside a sword for a long time, waiting for Link's moment of heroic duties.*
- 2. She was practically alone during all this time.*
- 3. She knows someone else other than Link before meeting him.*
- 4. She has absolutely NO experience of the real world, despite her knowledge of it.*
- 5. She lacks emotions at first because no one really cared for her in the first place.*
- 6. She is unsure of herself, so she depends on statistics in order to guide Link.*
- 7. She gets mind blown by the world's vastness, so she gets the urge to speak up.*
- 8. She states the obvious, like a child, because her mind is still very young.*
- 9. She has long lines of dialog because she has a whole dictionary at her disposal.*
- 10. She did all of this because it made her feel actual emotions in the end.*

As it turns out, Fi is just as complex as any other character...it's just that it's so ambiguous that in order to understand her you have to use your own head to figure her out.



## BUT DOES THAT REALLY JUSTIFY HER?

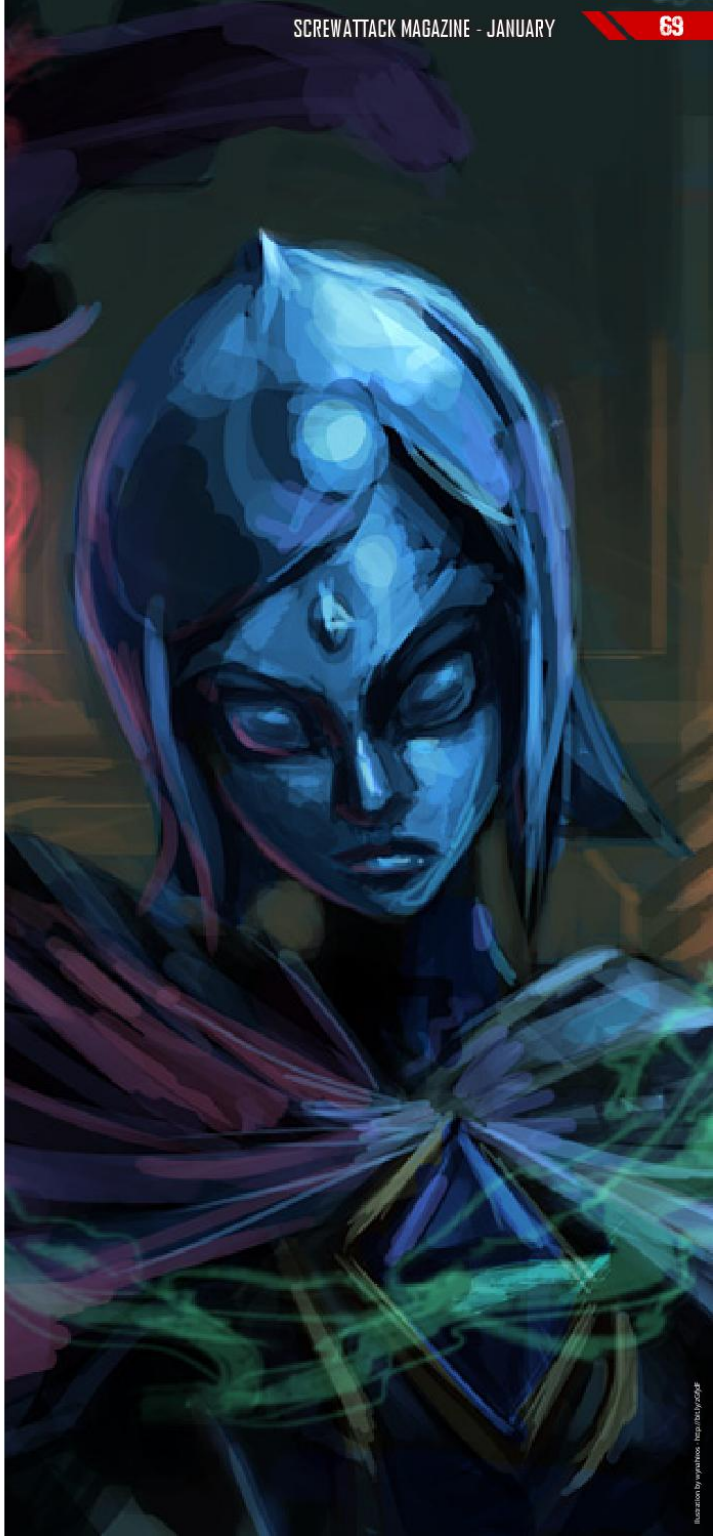
The answer to that question is very simple: Not really. Look, I can go ahead and keep analyzing her as much as she analyzes my whole adventure, but it's just a poor excuse to think that she's an awesome character purely because she can dance, sing and be emotionless all at the same time, while hiding ambiguous layers of complexity that you'll have to dig-in in order to see them.

You know who also did all of that and actually made a far more compelling character? Yuki Nagato. LOOK IT UP. What, am I comparing two totally different characters in two different settings in two TOTALLY different genres? Why, I don't see why Nintendo couldn't take cues from the vast world of anime to make a compelling character in the first place... oh wait... Metroid Other M...

Okay, so you got me there with one giant low blow to the nuts. But you know what? That still doesn't make Fi's character any better than any of the other companions in the Zelda series.

I totally appreciate that she has a lot of information to offer you whenever you need it, but sometimes less is more. Hell, sometimes I wonder if Nintendo purposely made her this way in order make gamers appreciate just how tame Navi is in reality. It also makes me actually GO BACK to Want Midna Back and actually revive that initiative once and for all.

Nintendo made such an awesome companion back then – why not take some lessons from Twilight Princess and make someone that's actually worth listening or caring for?







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We also always learn things as well. For example; did you know that Orange is the mightiest color in the world? Neither did us until we all watched a Godzilla movie.

In fact, I have come up with a very quick and sort list of the colors starting with the weakest all the way to the strongest. Here they are. 5 Yellow. 4 Purple. 3 Blue. 2 Green. And (as if your surprised.) 1 Orange. Also we learned that a rag is the deadliest weapon in the world. An Orange rag is even deadlier. Jake frost is possessed by the devil and will give you

nightmares. We learned all that form being a part of G1 Movie Night. So you could say that G1 Movie Night could be the most entertaining and most educative night of your life. If you don't want to be a part of G1 Movie Night I'm going to ask.

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# SCREW ATTACK

## MAGAZINE

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